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No 4 in RS 1767
P L A Y S 3/16 of

THE ORPHAN:

AND

VENICE PRESERV'D.

BY

THOMAS OTWAY.

To which is Prefixed,

A short Account of the LIFE of the
AUTHOR.

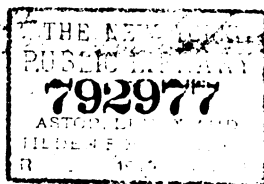
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A short Account of the LIFE of OTWAY.

THOMAS OTWAY was the son of the Reverend Mr. Humphry Otway, rector of Wolbeding in Sussex, and was born in the year 1651—He received his education at Wickeham School near Winchester, and became a Commoner of Christ's Church, in Oxford, in 1669—But, on his quitting the University, and coming to London, he turned Player.—His success, as an actor, was but indifferent; he was more valued for the sprightliness of his conversation, and the acuteness of his wit; which gained him the friendship of the Earl of Plymouth *, who procured him a Cornet's commission in the troops which then served in Flanders.

Our author, like the rest of the wits of every age, was but a bad oeconomist; and therefor it is no wonder that we generally find him in very necessitous circumstances.—This was particularly the case with him at his return from Flanders.—He was, moreover, averse to the military profession; and it is therefor not extraordinary, all things considered, that he and his commission soon quarrelled, and parted, never to meet again.

After this, he had recourse to writing for the stage; and now it was that he found out the only employment that nature seems to have fitted him for.—In Comedy, he has been deemed too licen-

* Charles Fitz-Charles, one of the natural sons of Charles II.

tious; which, however, was no great objection to them in the profligate days of Charles II.—But in Tragedy, few of our English Poets ever equalled him; and perhaps none ever excelled him, in touching the passions, particularly the tender passions.—There is generally something familiar and domestic in the fable of his tragedy, and there is amazing energy in his expression.—The heart, that does not melt at the distresses of his *Orphan*, must be hard indeed!

In his decline of life, he experienced many reverses of fortune, in regard to his circumstances, all generally changing for the worse: he had the misfortune to die wretchedly in a public house, on Tower-Hill, whither, it is supposed, he had retired to avoid the pressure of his creditors.—Some have said, that downright hunger, compelling him to fall too eagerly upon a piece of bread, of which he had been some time in want, the first mouthful choked him, and instantly put a period to his days.—Thus died the famous OTWAY, not more remarkable for moving the tender passions, than for the variety of fortune to which he himself was subjected.

Testimonies of Authors concerning OTWAY and his Writings.

TO express the *passions*, which are seated on the heart, is one great precept of the Painters, and very difficult to perform. In poetry, the same *passions* and notions of the mind are to be expressed; and in this consists the principal difficulty, as well as the excellency of that art. This (says my author *) is the gift of Jupiter: and to speak in the same heathen language, we call it the gift of our Apollo; not to be obtained by pains and study, if we are not born to it. For the notions which are studied, are never so natural as those which break out in the height of a real passion. OTWAY professed this part as thoroughly as well as any of the Ancients or Moderns. I will not defend every thing in his *Venice Preserv'd*; but I must bear this testimony to his memory, that the *passions* are truly touched in it, though perhaps, there is somewhat to be desired both in the grounds of them, and in the height and elegance of expression; but *nature* is there which is the greatest beauty.

* Mons. Du FRESNOY.

DRYDEN, in his parallel between Painting and Poetry: prefixed to his translation of Fresnoy's art of Painting.

OTWAY has followed nature in the language of his tragedy, and, therefor, shines in the passionate parts, more than any of our English poets. As there is something familiar and domestic in the fable of his tragedy, more than in those of any other poet, he has little pomp, but great force in his expressions.

ADDISON.

OTWAY had a genius finely turned to the pathetic—but though a profest Royalist, could not even procure bread by his writings; and he had the singular fate of dying literally of hunger.

HUME's History.

OTWAY's tragedies are celebrated above all others for warmth and pathetic tenderness. He lived utterly neglected, and died for hunger.

Dr. SMOLLET's History,

Dread o'er the scene, the Ghost of Hamlet stalks;
Othello rages; poor MONIMIA mourns;
And BELVIDERA pours her soul in love:
Terror alarms the breast; the comely tear
Steals o'er the cheek.—

THOMSON's Seasons.

FRIENDSHIP, less vigorous than self-love, is, for that reason, less apt to communicate itself to my friend's children or other relations. Instances however are not wanting, of such communicated passion arising from friendship when it is strong. Friendship may go higher in the matrimonial state than in any other condition: and OTWAY, in *Venice preserv'd*, shows a fine taste in taking advantage of that circumstance: in the scene where Belvidera sues to her father for pardon, she is represented as pleading her mother's merit, and the resemblance she bore to her mother.

Priuli. My daughter!

Belvidera. Yes, your daughter, by a mother
Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honour,
Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,
Dear to your arms. By all the joys she gave you
When in her blooming years she was your treasure,
Look kindly on me; in my face behold
The lineaments of hers y' have kiss'd so often,
Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off child.

And again,

Belvidera. Lay me, I beg you, lay me
By the dear ashes of my tender mother:
She would have pitied me, had fate yet spar'd her.

Lord KAIMS. Elem. of Crit.

IN OTWAY's *Orphan*, we have an illustrious example of the address employed to gratify opposite passions directed upon the same object. Castalio and Polydore, brothers and rivals, had sworn mutual confidence: Castalio broke his faith by a private marriage; which unwarily betrayed Polydore into a dismal deed, that of polluting his brother's bed. Thus he had injured his brother, and was injured by him: justice prompted him to make full atonement by his own death; resentment against his brother, required a full atonement to be made to himself. In coexistent passions so contradictory, one of them commonly prevails after a struggle: but here happily an expedient occurred to Polydore for gratifying both; which was, that he should provoke his brother to put him to death. Polydore's crime, in his own opinion, merited this punishment; and justice was satisfied, when he fell by the hands of the man he had injured: he wanted, at the same time, to punish his brother for breach of faith; and he could not do this more effectually, than by betraying his brother to be his executioner.

THE SAME.

A wicked or disgraceful action is disagreeable not only to others, but even to the delinquent himself; and raises in both a painful emotion including a desire of punishment. The painful emotion felt by the delinquent, is distinguished by the name of *remorse*; and in this case, the desire he has to punish is directed to himself. There cannot be imagined a better contrivance to deter us from vice; for remorse itself is a severe punishment. This passion, and a desire of self-punishment derived from it, are touched delicately by Terence:

Menedemus. Ubi comperi ex iis, qui ei fuere conscii,
Domum revortor mœstus, atque animo fere
Perturbato, atque incerto præ ægritudine : etc. HEAUT.

OTWAY reaches the same sentiment :

Monimia. Let mischiefs multiply : let ev'ry hour
Of my loath'd life yield me increase of horror!
Oh let the sun to these unhappy eyes
Ne'er shine again, but be eclips'd for ever!
May every thing I look on seem a prodigy,
To fill my soul with terror, till I quite
Forget I ever had humanity,
And grow a curser of the works of nature!

THE SAME.

FIGURATIVE expression, being the work of an enlivened imagination, cannot be the language of anguish or distress. OTWAY, sensible of this, has painted a scene of distress in colours finely adapted to the subject : there is scarce a figure in it, except a short and natural simile with which the speech is introduced. Belvidera talking to her father of her husband :

Think you saw what past at our last parting;
Think you beheld him like a raging lion,
Pacing the earth, and tearing up his steps,
Fate in his eyes, and roaring with the pain
Of burning fury ; think you saw his one hand
Fix'd on my throat, while the extended other
Grasp'd a keen threat'ning dagger ; oh, 'twas thus
We last embrac'd, when trembling with revenge,
He dragg'd me to the ground, and at my bosom
Presented horrid death ; cry'd out, My friends !
Where are my friends ? swore, wept, rag'd, threaten'd, lov'd ;
For he yet lov'd, and that dear love preserv'd me
To this last trial of a father's pity.

I fear not death, but cannot bear a thought
 That that dear hand should do the unfriendly office;
 If I was ever then your care, now hear me;
 Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives
 Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

THE SAME.

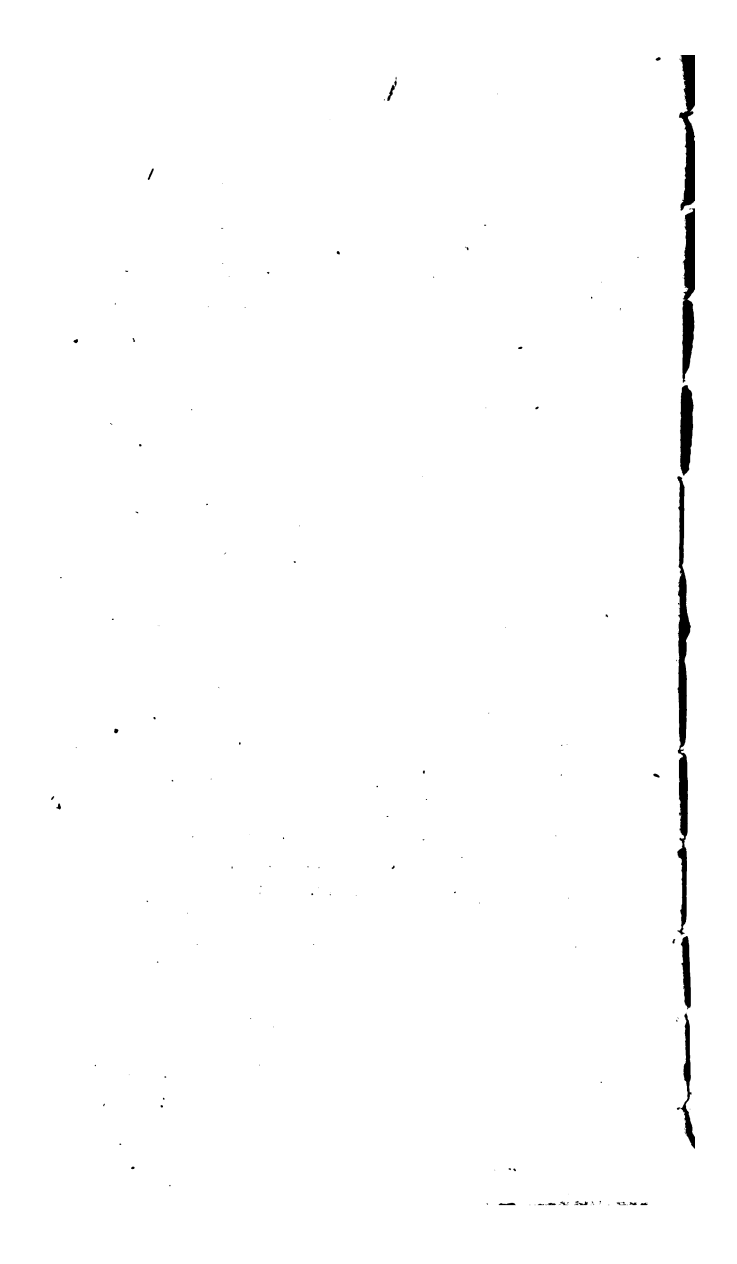
IN short, a perfect character suffering under misfortunes, is qualified for being the subject of a pathetic tragedy, provided chance be excluded. Nor is a perfect character altogether inconsistent with a moral tragedy: it may successfully be introduced as an under-part, supposing the chief place to be filled with an imperfect character from which a moral can be drawn. This is the case of Desdemona and Mariamne just now mentioned; and it is the case of MONIMIA and BELVIDERA, in OTWAY's two tragedies, *The Orphan*, and *Venice preserv'd*.

THE SAME.

T H E
O R P H A N:
O R, T H E
U N H A P P Y M A R R I A G E.
A
T R A G E D Y.

Qui Pelago credit magno, se fœnore tollit;
Qui pugas et Castra petit, precingitur Auro;
Vilis Adulator picto jacet Ebrius Ostro;
Et qui sollicitat Nuptas, ad præmia peccat;
Sola pruinosis horret Facundia pannis,
Atque inopi lingua desertas invocat Artes.

Petron. Arb. Sat.



T O H E R
R O Y A L H I G H N E S S
T H E
D U C H E S S.

M A D A M,

AFTER having a great while wished to write something that might be worthy to lay at your Highness's feet, and finding it impossible: since the world has been so kind to me to judge of this Poem to my advantage, as the most pardonable fault which I have made in its kind; I had sinn'd against myself, if I had not chosen this opportunity to implore (what my ambition is most fond of) Your favour and protection.

For though fortune would not so far bless my endeavours, as to encourage them with your Royal Highness's presence, when this came into the world; yet, I cannot but declare it was my design and hopes, it might have been your divertisement in that happy season, when you returned again to cheer all those eyes, that had before wept for you.

DEDICATION.

departure, and enliven all hearts, that had drooped for your absence: when wit ought to have paid its choicest tributes in, and joy have known no limits, then I hoped my little mite would not have been rejected; though my ill fortune was too hard for me, and I lost a greater honour, by your Royal Highness's absence, than all the applauses of the world besides can make me reparation for.

Nevertheless, I thought myself not quite unhappy, so long as I had hopes this way yet to recompense my disappointment past: when I considered also, that Poetry might claim right to a little share in your favour: for TASSO and ARIOSTO, some of the best, have made their names eternal, by transmitting to after-ages, the glory of your ancestors; and under the spreading of that shade, where two of the best have planted their lawrels, how honoured should I be, who am the worst, if but a branch might grow for me!

I dare not think of offering any thing in this address, that might look like a panegyric, for fear, lest when I have done my best, the world should condemn me, for saying too little; and you yourself check me, for meddling with a task unfit for my talent.

For the description of virtues and perfections, so rare as yours are, ought to be done by as deliberate,

D E D I C A T I O N.

as skilful a hand; the features must be drawn very fine, to be like; hasty dawbing will but spoil the picture, and make it so unnatural, as must want false lights to set it off: and your virtue can receive no more lustre from practices, than your beauty can be improved by art: which as it charms the bravest prince that ever amazed the world with his virtue; so, let but all other hearts enquire into themselves, and then judge, how it ought to be praised.

Your love too, as none but that great hero, who has it, could deserve it, and therefor, by a particular lot from heaven, was destined to so extraordinary a blessing, so matchless for its self, and so wond'rous for its constancy, shall be remembered to your immortal honour, when all other transactions of the age you live in shall be forgotten.

But I forget that I am to ask pardon for the fault I have been all this while committing. Wherefor, I beg your Highness to forgive me this presumption, and that you will be pleased to think well of one who cannot help resolving with all the actions of life, to endeavour to deserve it: nay more, I would beg and hope it may be granted, that I may, through yours, never want an advocate in his favour, whose heart and mind you have so entire a share in; it is my only portion and

DEDICATION.

my fortune, I cannot but be happy so long as I have but hopes I may enjoy it, and I must be miserable, should it ever be my ill fate to lose it.

This, with eternal wishes for your Royal Highness's content, happiness, and prosperity, in all humility, is presented by

Your most obedient and

devoted servant,

THO. OTWAY.

P R O L O G U E.

TO you, great judges in this writing age,
 The sons of wit, and patrons of the stage,
 With all those humble thoughts, which still have sway'd
 His pride, much doubting, trembling, and afraid
 Of what is to his want of merit due,
 And aw'd by every excellence in you,
 The author sends to beg you will be kind,
 And spare those many faults you needs must find.
 You to whom wit a common foe is grown,
 The thing ye scorn and publicly disown;
 Though now perhaps y'are here for other ends,
 He swears to me ye ought to be his friends;
 For he ne'er call'd ye yet insipid tools;
 Nor wrote one line to tell ye you were fools:
 But says of wit ye have so large a store,
 So very much, you never will have more.
 He ne'er with libel treated yet the town,
 The names of honest men bedawb'd and shown,
 Nay, never once lampoon'd the harmless life
 Of suburb virgin, or of city wife.
 Satire's th' effect of poetry's disease,
 Which, sick of a lewd age, she vents for ease;
 But now her only strife should be to please;
 Since of ill-fate the baneful cloud's withdrawn,
 And happiness again begins to dawn;
 Since back with joy and triumph he is come,
 That always drew fears hence, ne'er brought 'em home,
 Oft has he plow'd the boisterous ocean o'er,
 Yet ne'er more welcome to the longing shore,
 Not when he brought home victories before.
 For then fresh lawrels flourish'd on his brow,
 And he comes crown'd with olive branches now:
 Receive him! O receive him as his friends,
 Embrace the blessings which he recommends;
 Such quiet as your foes shall ne'er destroy;
 Then shake off fears, and clap your hands for joy.

The P E R S O N S.

M E N.

Acasto, a Nobleman retired from
the court, and living privately } *Mr. Gillow.*
in the country,

Castalio, } his sons, } *Mr. Betterton.*
Polydore, } *Mr. Williams.*

Chamont, a young soldier of fortune, *Mr. Smith.*

Ernesto, } servants in the family, } *Mr. Norris.*
Paulino, } *Mr. Wiltshire.*

Cordelio, *Polydore's Page*, *A little Girl.*

Chaplain, *Mr. Percival.*

W O M E N.

Monimia, the Orphan, left under } *Mrs. Barry.*
the guardianship of old *Acasto*.

Serina, *Acasto's daughter*, *Mrs. Boteler.*

Florella, *Monimia's woman*, *Mrs. Osborn.*

SCENE, B O H E M I A.

T H E
O R P H A N.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Enter PAULINO and ERNESTO.

PAULINO.

TIS strange, *Ernesto*, this severity
Should still reign pow'rful in *Acasto's* mind,
To hate the court where he was bred and liv'd,
All honours heap'd on him that pow'r could give.

ERNESTO.

'Tis true, he thither came a private gentleman,
But young and brave, and of a family
Ancient and noble as the empire holds.
The honours he has gain'd are justly his;
He purchas'd them in war: thrice has he led
An army 'gainst the rebels, and as often
Return'd with victory; the world has not
A truer foldier, or a better subject.

PAULINO.

It was his virtue at first made me serve him;
He is the best of masters as of friends:
I know he has lately been invited thither;

10 T H E O R P H A N.

Yet still he keeps his stubborn purpose, cries,
He's old, and willingly would be at rest :
I doubt there's deep resentment in his mind,
For the late flight his honour suffer'd there.

ERNESTO.

Has he not reason ? When for what he had borne
Long, hard, and faithful toil, he might have claim'd
Places in honour, and employment high ;
A huffing, shining, flatt'ring, cringing coward,
A canker-worm of peace, was rais'd above him.

PAULINO.

Yet still he holds just value for the king,
Nor ever names him but with highest reverence.
Tis noble that——

ERNESTO.

Oh ! I have heard him wanton in his praise,
Speak things of him might charm the ears of envy.

PAULINO.

Oh may he live till nature's self grow old,
And from her womb no more can bless the earth !
For when he dies, farewell all honour, bounty,
All generous encouragement of arts ;
For charity herself becomes a widow.

ERNESTO.

No, he has two sons that are ordain'd to be
As well his virtue's as his fortune's heirs.

PAULINO.

They're both of nature mild, and full of sweetness.
They came twins from the womb, and still they live

As if they would go twins too to the grave :
Neither has any thing he calls his own,
But of each others joy, as griefs partaking ;
So very honestly, so well they love,
As they were only for each other born.

re,

ERNESTO.

Never was parent in an off-spring happier ;
He has a daughter too, whose blooming age
Promises goodness equal to her beauty.

PAULINO.

And as there is a friendship 'twixt the brethren,
So has her infant nature chosen too
A faithful partner of her thoughts and wishes,
And kind companion of her harmless pleasures.

ERNESTO.

You mean the beauteous orphan, fair *Monimia* !

PAULINO.

The same, the daughter of the brave *Chamont*.
He was our lord's companion in the wars,
Where such a wond'rous friendship grew between 'em
As only death could end : *Chamont's* estate
Was ruin'd in our late and civil discords ;
Therefor unable to advance her fortune,
He left his daughter to our master's care ;
To such a care as she scarce lost a father.

ERNESTO.

Her brother to the Emperor's wars went early,
To seek a fortune or a noble fate ;
Whence he with honour is expected back,

And mighty marks of that great Prince's favour,

PAULINO.

Our master never would permit his sons
To launch for fortune in th' uncertain world,
But warns 'em to avoid both courts, and camps,
Where dilatory fortune plays the jilt
With the brave, noble, honest, gallant man,
To throw herself away on fools and knaves.

ERNESTO.

They both have forward, gen'rous, active spirits:
'Tis daily their petition to their father,
To send them forth where glory's to be gotten;
They cry they're weary of their lazy home,
Restless to do something that fame may talk of,
To-day they chas'd the boar, and near this time
Should be return'd.

PAULINO.

Oh that's a royal sport!

We yet may see the old man in a morning,
Lusty as health come ruddy to the field,
And there pursue the chace, as if he meant
Too'ertake time, and bring back youth again. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CASTALIO, POLYDORE, and Page.

CASTALIO.

Polydore! our sport
Has been to day much better for the danger;
When on the brink the foaming boar I met;
And in his side thought to have lodg'd my spear,
The desperate savage rush'd within my force,

And bore me headlong with him down the rock.

POLYDORE.

But then——

CASTALIO.

Ay then, my brother, my friend *Polydore*,
Like *Perseus* mounted on his winged steed,
Came on, and down the dang'rous precipice leapt
To save *Castalio*. 'Twas a god-like act.

POLYDORE.

But when I came, I found you conqueror.
Oh my heart danc'd to see your danger past!
The heat and fury of the chace was cold,
And I had nothing in my mind but joy.

CASTALIO.

So, *Polydore*, methinks we might in war
Rush on together; thou shouldst be my guard,
And I be thine; what is't could hurt us then?
Now half the youth of *Europe* are in arms,
How fulsome must it be to stay behind,
- And die of rank diseases here at home?

POLYDORE.

No, let me purchase in my youth renown,
To make me lov'd and valu'd when I'm old;
I would be busy in the world, and learn,
Not like a coarse and useless dunghill weed,
Fixt to one spot, and rot just as I grow.

CASTALIO.

Our father
Has ta'en himself a surfeit of the world,

And cries it is not safe that we should taste it;
I own I have duty very powerful in me;
And tho' I'd hazard all to raise my name,
Yet he's so tender, and so good a father,
I could not do a thing to cross his will.

POLYDORE.

Castalio, I have doubts within my heart,
Which you, and only you, can satisfy:
Will you be free and candid to your friend?

CASTALIO.

Have I a thought my *Polydore* should not know
What can this mean?

POLYDORE.

Nay, I'll conjure you too,
By all the strictest bonds of faithful friendship,
To shew your heart as naked in this point
As you would purge you of your sins to heav'n.

CASTALIO.

I will.

POLYDORE.

And should I chance to touch it nearly, bear it
With all the suff'rance of a tender friend.

CASTALIO.

As calmly as the wounded patient bears
The artist's hand, that ministers his cure.

POLYDORE.

That's kindly said. You know our father's w:
The fair *Monimia*; is your heart at peace?
Is it so guarded that you could not love her.

T H E O R P H A N.

15

CASTALIO.

Suppose I should?

POLYDORE.

Suppose you should not, brother.

CASTALIO.

You'd say, I must not.

POLYDORE.

That would sound too roughly

'Twixt friends and brothers, as we two are,

CASTALIO.

Is love a fault?

POLYDORE.

In one of us it may be:

What if I love her?

CASTALIO.

Then I must inform you

I lov'd her first, and cannot quit the claim,

But will preserve the birth-right of my passion.

POLYDORE.

You will.

CASTALIO.

I will.

POLYDORE.

No more, I've done.

CASTALIO.

Why not?

POLYDORE.

I told you I had done;

But you *Castalio* would dispute it.

CASTALIO.

No:

Not with my *Polydore*; though I must own
My nature obstinate and void of suff'rance.
Love reigns a very tyrant in my heart,
Attended on his throne by all his guards
Of furious wishes, fears and nice suspicions.
I could not bear a rival in my friendship,
I am so much in love and fond of thee.

POLYDORE.

Yet you will break this friendship!

CASTALIO.

Not for crowns.

POLYDORE.

But for a toy you would, a woman's toy,
Unjust *Castalio*.

CASTALIO.

Pr'ythee, where's my fault?

POLYDORE.

You love *Monimia*.

CASTALIO.

Yes.

POLYDORE.

And you would kill me,
If I'm your rival.

CASTALIO.

No, sure we're such friends,
So much one man, that our affections too
Must be united, and the same as we are.

POLYDORE.

I dote upon *Monimia*.

CASTALIO.

Love her still;

Win and enjoy her.

POLYDORE.

Both of us cannot.

CASTALIO.

No matter

Whose chance it proves, but let's not quarrel for't,

POLYDORE.

You would not wed *Monimia*, would you?

CASTALIO.

Wed her!

No! were she all desire could wish, as fair

As would the vainest of her sex be thought,

With wealth beyond what woman's pride could waste,

She should not cheat me of my freedom. Marry!

When I am old and weary of the world,

I may grow desperate,

And take a wife to mortify withal.

POLYDORE.

It is an elder brother's duty so

To propagate his family and name:

You would not have yours die and buried with you?

CASTALIO.

Mere vanity, and silly dotage all;

No, let me live at large, and when I die——

C

POLYDORE.

Who shall possess th' estate you leave?

CASTALIO.

My friend

If he survives me; if not, my king,
Who may bestow't again on some brave man,
Whose honesty and services deserve one.

POLYDORE.

'Tis kindly offer'd.

CASTALIO.

By yon Heav'n, I love
My *Polydore* beyond all worldly joys,
And would not shock his quiet, to be blest
With greater happiness than man e'er tasted.

POLYDORE.

And by that heaven eternally I swear,
To keep the kind *Castalio* in my heart.
Whose shall *Monimia* be?

CASTALIO.

No matter who

POLYDORE.

Were you not with her privately last night

CASTALIO.

I was, and should have met her here again;
But th' opportunity shall now be thine;
Myself will bring thee to the scene of love
But have a care, by friendship I conjure;
That no false play be offer'd to thy brother
Urge all thy pow'rs to make thy passion
Right wrong not mine.

POLYDORE.

Heav'n blast me if I do.

CASTALIO.

If't prove thy fortune, *Polydore*, to conquer,
(For thou hast all the arts of soft persuasion!)
Trust me, and let me know thy love's success,
That I may ever after stifle mine.

POLYDORE.

Though she be dearer to my soul; than rest
To weary pilgrims, or to misers gold,
To great men pow'r, or weakly cities pride,
Rather than wrong *Castalio*, I'd forget her.
For if ye Pow'rs have happiness in store,
When ye wou'd show'r down joys on *Polydore*,
In one great blessing all your bounty send,
That I may never lose so dear a friend.

[*Exeunt Cast. Pol. Manet Page.*]

Enter MONIMIA.

MONIMIA.

So soon return'd from hunting! This fair day
Seems as if sent to invite th' world abroad.
Pals'd not *Castalio* and *Polydore* this way?

PAGE.

Madam, just now,

MONIMIA.

Sure some ill fate's upon me,
Distrust and heaviness sit round my heart,
And apprehension shocks my timorous soul.
Why was I not laid in my peaceful grave

With my poor parents ! and at rest as they are !

Instead of that, I'm wand'ring into cares.

Castalio ! O *Castalio* ! Thou hast caught

My foolish heart ; and like a tender child,

That trusts his play-thing to another hand,

I fear its harm, and fain would have it back.

Come near, *Cordelio*, I must chide you, Sir,

PAGE.

Why, madam, have I done you any wrong ?

MONIMIA.

I never see you now ; you have been kinder ;

Sate by my bed, and sung me pretty songs :

Perhaps I've been ungrateful : here's money for you

Will you oblige me ? Shall I see you oftner ?

PAGE.

Madam, I'd serve you with my soul ;

But in the morning when you call me to you,

As by your bed I stand and tell you stories,

I am ashamed to see your swelling breasts,

It makes me blush they are so very white.

MONIMIA.

Oh men for flattery and deceit renown'd !

Thus when y'are young, ye learn it all like him,

Till as your years encrease, that strengthens too,

T'undo poor maids, and make our ruin easy.

Tell me, *Cordelio*, for thou oft hast heard

Their friendly converse, and their bosom secrets,

Sometimes at least, have they not talk'd of me ?

P A G E.

Oh madam ! very wickedly they have talk'd !
But I'm afraid to name it, for they say
Boys must be whipp'd that tell their master's secrets.

MONIMIA.

Fear not, *Cordelio* ! It shall ne'er be known ;
For I'll preserve the secret as 'twere mine.
Polydore cannot be so kind as I.
I'll furnish thee for all thy harmless sports
With pretty toys, and thou shalt be my page.

P A G E.

And truly, madam, I had rather be so.
Methinks you love me better than my lord,
For he was never half so kind as you are.
What must I do ?

MONIMIA.

Inform me how thou hast heard
Castalio, and his brother, use my name.

P A G E.

With all the tenderness of love,
You were the subject of their last discourse.
At first I thought it would have fatal prov'd ;
But as the one grew hot, the other cool'd,
And yielded to the frailty of his friend ;
At last, after much struggling 'twas resolv'd——

MONIMIA.

What, good *Cordelio* ?

P A G E.

Not to quarrel for you.

MONIMIA.

I would not have 'em, by my dearest hopes,
I would not be the argument of strife.
But surely my *Castalio* won't forsake me,
And make a mockery of my easy love.
Went they together ?

PAGE.

Yes, to seek you, madam;
Castalio promis'd *Polydore* to bring him
Where he alone might meet you,
And fairly try the fortune of his wishes,

MONIMIA.

Am I then grown so cheap, just to be made
A common stake, a prize for love in jest ?
Was not *Castalio* very loth to yield it,
Or was it *Polydore's* unruly passion,
That heightened the debate.

PAGE.

The fault was *Polydore's*.
Castalio play'd with love, and smiling shew'd
The pleasure, not the pangs of his desire.
He said no woman's smiles should buy his freedom;
And marriage is a mortifying thing.

MONIMIA.

Then I am ruin'd, if *Castalio's* false ;
Where is there faith and honour to be found ?
Ye Gods, that guard the innocent, and guide
The weak ; protect, and take me to your care.
Oh but I love him ! there's the rock will wreck me !

Why was I made with all my senses softness,
Yet want the cunning to conceal its follies?
I'll see *Castalio*, tax him with his falsehoods,
Be a true woman, rail, protest my wrongs;
Resolve to hate him, and yet love him still.

Enter CASTALIO and POLYDORE.

He comes, the conqueror comes! lie still, my heart,
And learn to bear thy injuries with scorn.

CASTALIO.

Madam, my brother begs he may have leave
To tell you something that concerns you nearly;
I leave you as becomes me, and withdraw.

MONIMIA.

My lord *Castalio*!

CASTALIO.

Madam!

MONIMIA.

Have you propos'd
To abuse me palpably? What means this usage?
Why am I left with *Polydore* alone?

CASTALIO.

He best can tell you. Business of importance
Calls me away, I must attend my father.

MONIMIA.

Will you then leave me thus?

CASTALIO.

But for a moment.

MONIMIA.

It has been otherwise; the time has been.

24 THE ORPHAN.

When business might have stay'd, and I been heard

CASTALIO.

I could for ever hear thee; but this time
Matters of such odd circumstances press me,
That I must go——

[Exit.

MONIMIA.

Then go, and if't be possible for ever.
Well, my lord *Polydore*, I guess your business,
And read th' ill-natur'd purpose in your eyes.

POLYDORE.

If to desire you more than misers wealth,
Or dying men an hour of added life,
If softest wishes, and a heart more true,
Than ever suffer'd yet for love disdain'd,
Speak an ill nature, you accuse me justly.

MONIMIA.

Talk not of love, my lord, I must not hear it.

POLYDORE.

Who can behold such beauty, and be silent?
Desire first taught us words: man, when created,
At first alone long wander'd up and down,
Forlorn, and silent as his vassal beasts;
But when a heav'n-born maid, like you, appear'd,
Strange pleasures fill'd his eyes, and fir'd his heart,
Unloos'd his tongue, and his first talk was love.

MONIMIA.

The first created pair, indeed, were blest;
They were the only objects of each other,
Therefor he courted her; and her alone:

But in this peopled world of beauty, where
There's roving room, where you may court, and ruin
A thousand more, why need you talk to me?

POLYDORE.

Oh! I could talk to thee for ever: Thus
Eternally admiring, fix and gaze
On those dear eyes; for every glance they send
Darts through my soul, and almost gives enjoyment.

MONIMIA.

How can you labour thus for my undoing?
I must confess, indeed, I owe you more
Than ever I can hope or think to pay.
There always was a friendship 'twixt our families;
And therefor when my tender parents dy'd,
Whose ruin'd fortunes too expir'd with them,
Your father's pity, and his bounty, took me,
A poor and helpless orphan to his care.

POLYDORE.

'Twas heav'n ordain'd it so, to make me happy.
Hence with this peevish virtue, 'tis a cheat,
And those who taught it first were hypocrites;
Come, these soft tender limbs were made for yielding.

MONIMIA.

[*Kneels.*

Here, on my knees, by Heaven's blest pow'r I swear,
If you persist, I ne'er henceforth will see you,
But rather wander through the world a beggar,
And live on sordid scraps at proud mens doors.
For though to fortune lost, I'll still inherit

My mother's virtues, and my father's honour.

POLYDORE.

Intolerable vanity ! your sex
Was never in the right ! y'are always false,
Or silly ; even your dresses are not more
Fantastic than your appetites : you think
Of nothing twice : opinion you have none.
To-day y'are nice, to morrow not so free ;
Now smile, then frown ; now sorrowful, then g
Now pleas'd, now not ; and all you know not w
Virtue you affect, inconstancy's your practice,
And when your loose desires once get dominion,
No hungry churl feeds coarser at a feast ;
Ev'ry rank fool goes down——

MONIMIA.

Indeed, my Lord,
I own my sex's follies ; I have 'em all,
And to avoid its fault, must fly from you :
Therefore believe me, could you raise me high
As most fantastic woman's wish could reach,
And lay all nature's riches at my feet ;
I'd rather run a savage in the woods
Amongst brute beasts, grow wrinkled and deform
As wildness and most rude neglect could make it
So I might still enjoy my honour safe
From the destroying wiles of faithless men.— E

POLYDORE.

Who'd be that sordid foolish thing call'd man
To cringe thus, fawn, and flatter for a ple

Which beasts enjoy so very much above him?
 The lusty bull ranges through all the field,
 And from the herd singling his female out,
 Enjoys her, and abandons her at will.
 It shall be so, I'll yet possess my love,
 Wait on, and watch her loose unguarded hours:
 Then when her roving thoughts have been abroad,
 And brought in wanton wishes to her heart;
 I' th' very minute when her virtue nods,
 I'll rush upon her in a storm of love,
 Beat down her guard of honour all before me,
 Surfeit on joys till ev'n desire grow sick;
 Then by long absence liberty regain,
 And quite forget the pleasure and the pain.

[Exit Pol. and Page.]

A C T II. S C E N E I.

Enter ACASTO, CASTALIO, POLYDORE,
Attendants.

ACASTO.

TO-day has been a day of glorious sport.
When you, *Castalia* and your brother left me,
Forth from the thickets rush'd another boar,
So large, he seem'd the tyrant of the woods;
With all his dreadful bristles rais'd up high,
They seem'd a grove of spears upon his back.
Foaming he came at me, where I was posted,
Best to observe which way he'd lead the chace,
Whetting his huge long tusks, and gaping wide,
As if he already had me for his prey;
Till brandishing my well-pois'd javelin high,
With this bold executing arm, I struck
The ugly brindled monster to the heart.

CASTALIO.

The actions of your life were always wond'rous.

ACASTO.

No flatt'ry, boy! an honest man can't live by't;
It is a little sneaking art, which knaves
Use to cajole and soften fools withal;
If thou hast flatt'ry in thy nature, out with't,
Or send it to a court, for there 'twill thrive.

POLYDORE.

Why there?

ACASTO.

'Tis, next to money, current there;
To be seen daily in as many forms
As there are sorts of vanities, and men;
The superstitious statesman has his sneer
To smoothe a poor man off with, that can't bribe him;
The grave dull fellow of small business soothes
The humorist, and will needs admire his wit:
Who without spleen could see a hot-brain'd atheist
Thanking a surly doctor for his sermon;
Or a grave counsellor meet a smooth young lord,
Squeeze him by the hand, and praise his good complexion?

POLYDORE.

Courts are the places where best manners flourish;
Where the deserving ought to rise, and fools
Make show. Why should I vex and chafe my spleen,
To see a gaudy coxcomb shine, when I
Have seen enough to soothe him in his follies,
And ride him to advantage as I please?

ACASTO.

Who merit, ought indeed to rise i'th' world,
But no wise man that's honest should expect it.
What man of sense would rack his generous mind,
To practise all the base formalities
And forms of business, force a grave starch'd face,
When he's a very libertine in's heart?
Seem not to know this or that man in public,

When privately perhaps they meet together,
 And lay the scene of some brave fellow's ruin.
 Such things are done——

CASTALIO.

Your lordship's wrongs have been
 So great, that you with justice may complain;
 But suffer us, whose younger minds ne'er felt
 Fortune's deceits, to court her as she's fair:
 Were she a common mistress, kind to all,
 Her worth would cease, and half the world grow idle

ACASTO.

Go to, you're fools, and know me not; I've learnt
 Long since to bear revenge, or scorn my wrongs,
 According to the value of the doer.
 You both would fain be great, and to that end
 Desire to do things worthy your ambition.
 Go to the camp, preferment's noblest mart,
 Where honour ought to have the fairest play, you'll find
 Corruption, envy, discontent, and faction,
 Almost in every band: how many men,
 Have spent their blood in their dear country's service,
 Yet now pine under want, while selfish slaves, [on,
 That ev'n could cut their throats, whom now they fawn
 Like deadly locusts eat the honey up,
 Which those industrious bees so hardly toil'd for!

CASTALIO.

These precepts suit not with my active mind,
 Methinks I would be busy.

POLYDORE.

So would I,

Not loiter out my life at home, and know
No farther than one prospect gives me leave.

ACASTO.

Busfy your minds then, study arts and men;
Learn how to value merit though in rags,
And scorn a proud ill-manner'd knave in office.

Enter SERINA, MONIMIA and Maid.

SERINA.

My lord, my father!

ACASTO.

Blessings on my child,
My little cherub, what hast thou to ask me?

SERINA.

I bring you, sir, most glad and welcome news:
The young *Chamont*, whom you've so often wish'd for,
Is just arriv'd and entering.

ACASTO.

By my soul
And all my honours, he's most dearly welcome;
Let me receive him like his father's friend.

Enter CHAMONT.

Welcome, thou relief of the best-lov'd man,
Welcome from all the turmoils, and the hazards
Of certain danger, and uncertain fortune;
Welcome as happy tydings after fears.

CHAMONT.

Words would but wrong the gratitude I owe you.
Should I begin to speak, my soul's so full,
That I should talk of nothing else all day.

MONIMIA.

My brother!

CHAMONT.

Oh my sister! let me hold thee
Long in my arms. I've not beheld thy face
These many days; by night I've often seen thee
In gentle dreams, and satisfy'd my soul
With fancy'd joys, till morning cares awak'd me
Another sister! sure it must be so,
Though, I remember well, I had but one:
But I feel something in my heart that prompts,
And tells me she has claim and interest there.

ACASTO.

Young foldier, you've not only study'd war,
Courtship, I see, has been your practice too,
And may not prove unwelcome to my daughter.

CHAMONT.

Is she your daughter? then my heart told true!
And I'm at least her brother by adoption:
For you have made yourself to me a father,
And by that patent I have leave to love her.

SERINA.

Monimia, thou hast told me men are false,
Will flatter, feign, and make an art of love:
Is *Chamont* so? No, sure he's more than man,
Something that's near divine, and truth dwells in him

ACASTO.

Thus happy, who would envy pompous pow'r,
The luxury of courts, or wealth of cities?

Let there be joy through all the house this day!
 In every room let plenty flow at large,
 It is the birth-day of my royal master.
 You have not visited the court, *Chamont*,
 Since your return?

CHAMONT.

I have no business there,
 I have not slavish temperance enough
 T'attend a fav'rite's heels, and watch his smiles;
 Bear an ill office done me to my face,
 And thank the lord that wrong'd me for his favour.

ACASTO.

This you would do. *[To his sons.]*

CASTALIO.

I'd serve my Prince.

ACASTO.

Who'd serve him?

CASTALIO.

I would, my lord.

POLYDORE.

And I; both would.

ACASTO.

Away.

He needs not any servants such as you!
 Serve him! he merits more than man can do!
 He is so good, praise cannot speak his worth:
 So merciful, sure he ne'er slept in wrath;
 So just, that were he but a private man,
 He could not do a wrong. How would you serve him?

E

CASTALIO.

I'd serve him with my fortune here at home,
 And serve him with my person in his wars,
 Watch for him, fight for him, bleed for him.

POLYDORÉ.

Die for him,
 As every true-born loyal subject ought.

ACASTO.

Let me embrace you both. Now by the souls
 Of my brave ancestors, I'm truly happy;
 For this be ever blest my marriage-day,
 Blest be your mother's memory that bore you,
 And double blest be that auspicious hour
 That gave ye birth. Yes, my aspiring boys,
 Ye shall have business; when your master wants you,
 You cannot serve a nobler; I have serv'd him;
 In this old body yet the marks remain
 Of many wounds. I've with this tongue proclaim'd
 His right, ev'n in the face of rank rebellion;
 And when a foul-mouth'd traitor once prophan'd
 His sacred name, with my good sabre drawn,
 Ev'n at the head of all his giddy rout,
 I rush'd, and clove the rebel to the chine.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

My lord, th'expected guests are just arriv'd.

ACASTO.

Go you, and give 'em welcome and reception.

CHAMONT.

My lord, I stand in need of your assistance
In something that concerns my peace and honour.

ACASTO.

Spoke like the son of that brave man I lov'd :
So freely friendly we convers'd together.
What e'er it be with confidence impart it.
Thou shalt command my fortune and my sword.

CHAMONT.

I dare not doubt your friendship nor your justice.
Your bounty shewn to what I hold most dear,
My orphan sister, must not be forgotten !

ACASTO.

Pr'ythee, no more of that ; it grates my nature.

CHAMONT.

When our dear parents dy'd, they dy'd together,
One fate surpriz'd 'em, and one grave receiv'd 'em :
My father with his dying breath bequeath'd
Her to my love : my mother, as she lay
Languishing by him, call'd me to her side,
Took me in her fainting arms, wept and embrac'd me,
Then press'd me close, and as she observ'd my tears,
Kist them away ; said she, *Chamont*, my son,
By this and all the love I ever shew'd thee,
Be careful of *Monimia*, watch her youth,
Let not her wants betray her to dishonour ;
Perhaps kind heav'n may raise some friend, then sigh'd,
Kist me again ; so blest us and expir'd.
Pardon my grief.

ACASTO.

It speaks an honest nature.

CHAMONT.

The friend heav'n rais'd was you, you took her up
An infant, to the desert world expos'd,
And prov'd another parent.

ACASTO.

I've not wrong'd her.

CHAMONT.

Far be it from my fears.

ACASTO.

Then why this argument?

CHAMONT.

My lord, my nature's jealous, and you'll bear it.

ACASTO.

Go on.

CHAMONT.

Great spirits bear misfortunes hardly :
Good offices claim gratitude; and pride,
Where pow'r is wanting, will usurp a little,
And make us (rather than be thought behind-hand)
Pay over-price.

ACASTO.

I cannot guess your drift;
Distrust you me?

CHAMONT.

No, but I fear her weakness
May make her pay a debt at any rate;
And to deal freely with your lordship's goodness,

I've heard a story lately much disturbs me.

ACASTO.

Then first charge her; and if the offence be found
Within my reach, tho' it should touch my nature,
In my own off-spring, by the dear remembrance
Of thy brave father, whom my heart rejoic'd in,
I'd prosecute it with severest vengeance. [Exit.

CHAMONT.

I thank you from my soul.

MONIMIA.

Alas, my brother!

What have I done? and why do you abuse me?
My heart quakes in me; in your settled face
And clouded brow methinks I see my fate:
You will not kill me!

CHAMONT.

Pr'ythee, why dost talk so?

MONIMIA.

Look kindly on me then. I cannot bear
Severity; it daunts, and does amaze me:
My heart's so tender, should you charge me rough
I should but weep, and answer you with sobbing.
But use me gently, like a loving brother,
And search through all the secrets of my soul.

CHAMONT.

Fear nothing, I will shew myself a brother,
A tender, honest, and a loving brother.
Y've not forgot our father?

MONIMIA.

I shall never.

CHAMONT.

Then you'll remember too, he was a man
That liv'd up to the standard of his honour,
And priz'd that jewel more than mines of wealth :
He'd not have done a shameful thing but once,
Though kept in darkness from the world, and hidden,
He could not have forgiven it to himself ;
This was the only portion that he left us ;
And I more glory in it, than if posselt
Of all that ever fortune threw on fools ;
Twas a large trust, and must be manag'd nicely ;
Now if by any chance, *Monimia*,
You have soil'd this gem, and taken from its value,
How will y'account with me ?

MONIMIA.

I challenge envy,
Malice and all the practices of hell,
To censure all the actions of my past
Unhappy life, and taint me if you can !

CHAMONT.

I'll tell thee then ; three nights ago, as I
Lay musing in my bed, all darkness round me,
A sudden damp struck to my heart, cold sweet
Dew'd all my face, and trembling seiz'd my limbs ;
My bed shook under me, the curtains started,
And to my tortur'd fancy there appear'd
The form of thee, thus beauteous as thou art.

Thy garments flowing loose, and in each hand
A wanton lover, who by turns carefs'd thee
With all the freedom of unbounded pleasure :
I snatch'd my sword; and in the very moment
Darted it at the phantom, strait it left me ;
Then rose and call'd for lights, when, O dire omen !
I found my weapon had the arras pierc'd,
Just where the famous tale was interwoven,
How the unhappy *Theban* slew his father.

MONIMIA.

And for this cause my virtue is suspected !
Because in dreams your fancy has been ridden,
I must be tortur'd walking !

CHAMONT.

Have a care ;
Labour not to be justified too fast :
Hear all, and then let justice hold the scale.
What follow'd was the riddle that confounds me :
Through a close lane, as I pursu'd my journey,
And meditated on the last night's vision,
I spy'd a wrinkled hag, with age grown double,
Picking dry sticks, and mumbling to herself ;
Her eyes with scalding rheum were gall'd and red ;
Cold palsy shook her head, her hands seem'd wither'd,
And on her crooked shoulders had she wrapt
The tatter'd remnant of an old strip'd hanging,
Which serv'd to keep her carcass from the cold ;
So there was nothing of a piece about her ;
Her lower weeds were all o'er coarsely patch'd
With diff'rent colour'd rags, black, red, white, yellow.

And seem'd to speak variety of wretchedness;
 I ask'd her of my way, which she inform'd me;
 Then crav'd my charity, and bad me hasten
 To save a sister. At that word I started.

MONIMIA.

The common cheat of beggars every day!
 They flock about our doors, pretend to gifts
 Of prophecy, and telling fools their fortunes.

CHAMONT.

Oh! but she told me such a tale, *Monimia*,
 As in it bore great circumstance of truth;
Castalio, and *Polydore*, my sister.

MONIMIA.

Hah!

CHAMONT.

What, alter'd! does your courage fail you!
 Now by my father's soul the witch was honest;
 Answer me, if thou hast not lost to them
 Thy honour at a fordid game.

MONIMIA.

I will,

I must, so hardly my misfortune loads me.
 That both have offer'd me their loves, most true.—

CHAMONT.

And 'tis as true too, they have both undone thee.

MONIMIA.

Though they both with earnest vows
 Have prest my heart, if e'er in thought I yielded
 To any but *Castalio*—

CHAMONT.

But *Castalio*!

MONIMIA.

Still will you cross the line of my discourse!
Yes, I confess that he has won my soul
By generous love, and honourable vows:
Which he this day appointed to compleat,
And make himself by holy marriage mine.

CHAMONT.

Art thou then spotless? hast thou still preserv'd
Thy virtue white without a blot untainted?

MONIMIA.

When I'm unchast, may heav'n reject my pray'rs!
Or more, to make me wretched, may you know it!

CHAMONT.

Oh then, *Monimia*! art thou dearer to me
Than all the comforts ever yet blest man.
But let not marriage bait thee to thy ruin.
Trust not a man; we are by nature false,
Dissembling, subtle, cruel, and inconstant:
When a man talks of love, with caution trust him;
But if he swears, he'll certainly deceive thee:
I charge thee let no more *Castalio* soothe thee:
Avoid it as thou would'st preserve the peace
Of a poor brother, to whose soul th'art precious.

MONIMIA.

I will.

CHAMONT.

Appear as cold, when next you meet, as great ones.

When merit begs, then shalt thou see how soon
His heart will cool, and all his pains grow easy. [*Exit.*

MONIMIA.

Yes, I will try him; torture him severely;
For, oh *Cordelio*! thou too much hast wrong'd me,
In leaving me to *Polydore*'s ill usage.
He comes; and now for once, oh Love, stand neuter!
Whilst a hard part's perform'd! for I must tempt,
Wound his soft nature, tho' my own heart akes for't.

[*Exit.*

Enter CASTALIO.

CASTALIO.

Monimia, Monimia!—She's gone;
And seem'd to part with anger in her eyes;
I am a fool; and she has found my weakness;
She uses me already like a slave
Fast bound in chains, to be chastis'd at will:
'Twas not well done to trifle with my brother:
I might have trusted him with all the secret,
Open'd my silly heart, and shewn it bare.
But then he loves her too; but not like me.
I am a doting honest slave, design'd
For bondage, marriage-bonds, which I have sworn
To wear: it is the only thing I e'er
Hid from his knowlege; and he'll sure forgive
The first transgression of a wretched friend
Betray'd to love, and all its little follies.

Enter POLYDORE, and Page at the door.

POLYDORE.

Here place yourself, and watch my brother throughly:
If he should chance to meet *Monimia*, make
Just observation of each word and action;
Pass not one circumstance without remark:
Sir, 'tis your office, do't and bring me word [*Ex. Pol.*]

Enter MONIMIA.

CASTALIO.

Monimia, my angel! 'twas not kind
To leave me like a turtle here alone,
To droop and mourn the absence of my mate.
When thou art from me every place is desert,
And I, methinks, am savage and forlorn;
Thy presence only 'tis can make me blest,
Heal my unquiet mind, and tune my soul.

MONIMIA.

Oh the bewitching tongues of faithless men!
'Tis thus the false *Hyæna* makes her moan,
To draw the pitying traveller to her den;
Your sex are so, such false dissemblers all,
With sighs and plaints y'entice poor women's hearts,
And all that pity you, are made your prey.

CASTALIO.

What means my love? Oh how have I deserv'd
This language from the sovereign of my joys!
Stop, stop, those tears, *Monimia*, for they fall
Like baneful dew from a distemper'd sky;
I feel 'em chill me to the very heart.

MONIMIA.

Oh, you are false, *Castalio*, most forsworn,
Attempt no farther to delude my faith.
My heart is fixt, and you shall shake't no more.

CASTALIO.

Who told you so? what hell-bred villain durst
Prophane the sacred business of my love?

MONIMIA.

Your brother, knowing on what terms I'm here,
Th'unhappy object of your father's charity,
Licentiously discours'd to me of love,
And durst affront me with his brutal passion.

CASTALIO.

'Tis I have been to blame, and only I,
False to my brother and unjust to thee.
For, oh! he loves thee too, and this day own'd it,
Tax'd me with mine, and claim'd a right above me.

MONIMIA.

And was your love so very tame to shrink,
Or rather than lose him, abandon me?

CASTALIO.

I, knowing him precipitate and rash,
To calm his heat, and to conceal my happiness,
Seem'd to comply with his unruly will;
Talk'd as he talk'd, and granted all he ask'd;
Left he in rage might have our loves betray'd,
And I for ever had *Monimia* lost.

MONIMIA.

Could you then? did you? can you own it too?

'Twas poorly done, unworthy of yourself;
And I can never think you meant me fair.

CASTALIO.

Is this *Monimia*? surely no! 'till now
I ever thought her dove-like, soft and kind.
Who trusts his heart with woman's surely lost:
You were made fair on purpose to undo us,
Whilst greedily we snatch th' alluring bait,
And ne'er distrust the poison that it hides.

MONIMIA.

When love ill plac'd would find a means to break—

CASTALIO.

It never wants pretences or excuse.

MONIMIA.

Man therefore was a lord-like creature made,
Rough as the winds, and as inconstant too:
A lofty aspect given him for command,
Easily soften'd, when he would betray:
Like conquering tyrants, you our breasts invade,
Where you are pleas'd to forage for a while;
But soon you find new conquests out, and leave
The ravag'd province ruinate and waste.
If so, *Castalio*, you have serv'd my heart,
I find that desolation's settled there,
And I shall ne'er recover peace again.

CASTALIO.

Who can hear this, and bear an equal mind!
Since you will drive me from you, I must go;
But, oh *Monimia*, when th' hast banish'd me,

No creeping slave, though tractable and dull,
 As artful woman for her ends would chuse,
 Shall ever dote as I have done: for oh!
 No tongue my pleasure nor my pain can tell,
 'Tis heav'n to have thee, and without thee hell.

MONIMIA.

Castalio! stay! we must not part. I find
 My rage ebbs out, and love flows in apace.
 These little quarrels love must needs forgive,
 They rouse up drowsy thoughts, and wake my soul.
 Oh! charm me with the music of thy tongue;
 I'm ne'er so blest as when I hear thy vows,
 And listen to the language of thy heart.

CASTALIO.

Where am I! surely paradise is round me!
 Sweets planted by the hand of heav'n grow here,
 And every sense is full of thy perfection.
 To hear thee speak might calm a madman's frenzy,
 'Till by attention he forgot his sorrows;
 But to behold thy eyes, thy 'mazing beauties
 Might make him rage again with love, as I do;
 To touch thee's heav'n, but to enjoy thee, oh!
 Thou nature's whole perfection in one piece!
 Sure framing thee heav'n took unusual care,
 As its own beauty it design'd thee fair;
 And form'd thee by the best-lov'd angel there. [Ex.] }

A C T III. S C E N E I.

Enter POLYDORE, and Page.

POLYDORE.

WERE they so kind? Express it to me all
In words, 'twill make me think I saw it too.

PAGE.

At first I thought they had been mortal foes;
Monimia rag'd, *Castalio* grew disturb'd,
Each thought the other wrong'd, yet both so haughty,
They scorn'd submission, though love all the while
The rebel play'd, and scarce could be contain'd.

POLYDORE.

But what succeeded?

PAGE.

Oh 'twas wond'rous pretty!
For of a sudden all the storm was past,
A gentle calm of love succeeded it;
Monimia sigh'd and blush'd, *Castalio* swore;
As you, my lord, I well remember did
To my young sister in the orange grove,
When I was first preferr'd to be your page.

POLYDORE.

Happy *Castalio*! Now, by my great soul,
M'ambitious soul that languishes to glory,
I'll have her yet, by my best hopes I will.

She shall be mine in spite of all her arts.
 But for *Castalio* why was I refus'd?
 Has he supplanted me by some foul play,
 Traduc'd my honour? Death! he durst not do
 It must be so: we parted, and he met her,
 Half to compliance brought by me, surpriz'd
 Her sinking virtue till she yielded quite:
 So poachers basely pick up tired game,
 Whilst the fair hunter's cheated of his prey.
 Boy!

PAGE.

My lord!

POLYDORE.

Go to your chamber, and prepare your lute;
 Find out some song to please me, that describes
 Womens hypocrisies, their subtle wiles,
 Betraying smiles, feign'd tears, inconstancies;
 Their painted outsides, and corrupted minds,
 The sum of all their follies, and their falshoods.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Oh the unhappiest tidings tongue e'er told!

POLYDORE.

The matter!

SERVANT.

Oh! your father, my good master,
 As with his guests he sat in mirth rais'd high,
 And chas'd the goblet round the joyful board,
 A sudden trembling seiz'd on all his limbs;

His eyes distorted grew; his visage pale!
His speech forsook him; life itself seem'd fled,
And all his friends are waiting now about him.

Enter ACASTO leaning on two.

ACASTO.

Support me, give me air, I'll yet recover;
'Twas a slip decaying nature made,
For she grows weary near her journey's end.
Where are my sons? come near, my *Polydore*;
Your brother! where's *Castalio*?

SERVANT.

My Lord,

I've search'd, as you commanded, all the house,
He and *Monimia* are not to be found.

ACASTO.

Not to be found! then where are all my friends?
'Tis well,—
I hope they'll pardon an unhappy fault
My unmannerly infirmity has made!
Death could not come in a more welcome hour,
For I'm prepar'd to meet him, and methinks
Would live and die with all my friends about me.

Enter CASTALIO.

CASTALIO.

Angels preserve my dearest father's life,
Bless it with long uninterrupted days!
Oh! may he live 'till time itself decay,
'Till good men with him dead, or I offend him!

G

ACASTO.

Thank you, *Castalio*, give me both your hands,
And bear me up: I'd walk: so now methinks
I appear as great as *Hercules* himself,
Supported by the pillars he had rais'd.

CASTALIO.

My lord, your Chaplain.

ACASTO.

Let the good man enter.

CHAPLAIN.

Heav'n guard your lordship, and restore your health

ACASTO.

I have provided for you, if I die.
No fawning! 'tis a scandal to thy office.
My sons, as thus united, ever live,
And for the estate, you'll find when I am dead
I have divided it betwixt you both,
Equally parted, as you shar'd my love;
Only to sweet *Monimia* I've bequeath'd
Ten thousand crowns, a little portion for her,
To wed her honourably as she's born.
Be not less friends because you're brothers; shun
The man that's singular, his mind's unsound,
His spleen o'erweighs his brains; but above all
Avoid the politic, the factious fool,
The busy, buzzing, talking, harden'd knave,
The quaint smooth rogue, that sins against his realm
Calls faucy loud suspicion, public zeal,
And mutiny, the dictates of his spirit:

Be very careful how you make new friends.
Men read not morals now ; it was a custom :
But all are to their father's vices born ;
And in their mother's ignorance are bred.
Let marriage be the last mad thing ye do,
For all the sins and follies of the past.
If you have children, never give them knowlege,
'Twill spoil their fortune, fools are all the fashion.
If you've religion, keep it to your selves ;
Atheists will else make use of toleration,
And laugh ye out of't : never shew religion,
Except ye mean to pass for knaves of conscience,
And cheat believing fools that think ye honest.

Enter SERINA.

SERINA.

My father !

ACASTO.

My heart's darling !

SERINA.

Let my knees

Fix to the earth. Ne'er let my eyes have rest,
But wake and weep 'till heav'n restore my father !

ACASTO.

Rise to my arms, and thy kind prayers are answer'd,
For thou'rt a wond'rous extract of all goodness,
Born for my joy, and no pain's felt when near thee.
Chamont !

Enter CHAMONT.

CHAMONT.

My lord, may't prove not an unlucky omen ;
Many I see are waiting round about you,
And I am come to ask a blessing too.

ACASTO.

May'st thou be happy !

CHAMONT.

Where ?

ACASTO.

In all my wishes !

CHAMONT.

Confirm me so, and make this fair one mine,
I am unpractis'd in the trade of courtship,
And know not how to deal love out with art ;
Onsets in love seem best like those in war,
Fierce, resolute, and done with all the force ;
So I would open my whole heart at once,
And pour out the abundance of my soul.

ACASTO.

What says *Serina* ? can'st thou love a soldier ?
One born to honour and to honour bred ;
One that has learn'd to treat even foes with kindness
To wrong no good man's fame, nor praise himself

SERINA.

Oh ! name not love, for that's ally'd to joy
And joy must be a stranger to my heart,
When you're in danger. May *Chamont's* good
Render him lovely to some happier maid !

Whilst I at friendly distance see him blest,
Praise the kind Gods, and wonder at his virtues.

ACASTO.

Chamont, pursue her, conquer and possess her,
And, as my son, a third of all my fortune
Shall be thy lot.
But keep thy eyes from wandering, man of frailty.
Beware the dangerous beauty of the wanton,
Shun their enticements; ruin like a Vulture
Waits on their conquests: falsehood too's their business;
They put false beauty off to all the world;
Use false endearments to the fools that love 'em;
And when they marry, to their silly husbands
They bring false virtue, broken fame and fortune.

MONIMIA.

Hear you that, my lord?

POLYDORÆ.

Yes, my fair monitor, old men always talk thus.

ACASTO.

Chamont, you told me of some doubts that press you,
Are you yet satisfied that I'm your friend?

CHAMONT.

My lord, I would not lose that satisfaction
For any blessing I could ever wish for.
As to my fears, already I have lost 'em;
They ne'er shall vex me more, or trouble you.

CHAMONT.

ACASTO.

I thank you. Daughter, you must do so too,
My friends, 'tis late,

For my disorder seems all past and over,
And I methinks begin to feel new health.

CASTALIO.

Would you but rest, it might restore you quite

ACASTO.

Yes, I'll to bed ; old men must humour weakne
Let me have music then to lull and chase
This melancholy thought of death away.
Good-night ! my friends, heav'n guard ye all ! go
To-morrow early we'll salute the day, [nigl
Find out new pleasures, and redeem lost time.

[*Exeunt all but Chamont and Chapla*

CHAMONT.

Hift, hift, Sir *Gravity*, a word with you.

CHAPLAIN.

With me, Sir !

CHAMONT.

If you're at leisure, Sir ; we'll waste an hour.
'Tis yet too soon to sleep, and 'twill be charity
To lend your conversation to a stranger.

CHAPLAIN.

Sir, you're a soldier ?

CHAMONT.

Yes.

CHAPLAIN.

I love a soldier,

And had been one myself, but that my parents
Would make me what you see me ; yet I'm ho
For all that I wear black.

CHAMONT.

And that's a wonder.

Have you had long dependence on this family ?

CHAPLAIN.

I have not thought it so, because my time's
Spent pleasantly. My lord's not haughty nor imperious,
Nor I gravely whimsical ; he has good-nature,
And I have manners :

His sons too are civil to me, because
I do not pretend to be wiser than they are ;
I meddle with no man's business but my own ;
I rise in a morning early, study moderately,
Eat and drink chearfully, live soberly,
Take my innocent pleasures freely,
So meet with respect, and am not the jest of the family.

CHAMONT.

I'm glad you are so happy.

A pleasant fellow this, and may be useful.
Knew you my father, the old *Chamont* ?

CHAPLAIN.

I did, and was most sorry when we lost him.

CHAMONT.

Why ? didst thou love him ?

CHAPLAIN.

[friend.

Every body lov'd him ; besides he was my master's

CHAMONT.

I could embrace thee for that very notion.
If thou didst love my father, I could think
Thou would'st not be an enemy to me.

CHAPLAIN.

I can be no man's foe.

CHAMONT.

Then pr'ythee tell me;
Think'st thou the lord *Castalio* loves my sifter;
Nay, never start. Come, come, I know thy office
Opens thee all the secrets of the family.
Then if thou'rt honest, use this freedom kindly.

CHAPLAIN.

Love your sifter?

CHAMONT.

Ay love her.

CHAPLAIN.

Sir, I never ask'd him,
And wonder you should ask it me.

CHAMONT.

Nay, but thou'rt an hypocrite; is there not one
Of all thy tribe that's honest in your schools?
The pride of your superiors makes ye slaves:
Ye all live loathsome, sneaking, servile lives;
Not free enough to practise generous truth,
Though ye pretend to teach it to the world.

CHAPLAIN.

I would deserve a better thought from you.

CHAMONT.

If thou wouldst have me not condemn thy office
And character, think all thy brethren knaves,
Thy trade a cheat, and thou its worst professor;
Inform me; for I tell thee, Priest, I'll know.

CHAPLAIN.

Either he loves her, or he much has wrong'd her.

CHAMONT.

How, wrong'd her? have a care: for this may lay
A scene of mischief to undo us all.

But tell me, wrong'd her, said'st thou?

CHAPLAIN.

Ay, Sir, wrong'd her.

CHAMONT.

This is a secret worth a monarch's fortune;
What shall I give thee for't? thou dear physician
Of sickly souls, unfold this riddle to me,
And comfort mine——

CHAPLAIN.

I would hide nothing from you willingly.

CHAMONT.

[me?

Nay, then again thou'rt honest. Wouldst thou tell

CHAPLAIN.

Yes, if I durst.

CHAMONT.

Why, what affrights thee?

CHAPLAIN.

You do,

Who are not to be trusted with the secret.

CHAMONT.

Why, I am no fool.

CHAPLAIN.

So indeed you say,

H

CHAMONT.

Pr'ythee, be serious then.

CHAPLAIN.

You see I am so,

And hardly shall be mad enough to-night,
To trust you with my ruin.

CHAMONT.

Art thou then

So far concern'd in't? What has been thy office?
Curse on that formal steady villain's face!
Just so do all bawds look; nay, bawds, they say,
Can pray upon occasion, talk of heav'n,
Turn up their gogling eye-balls, rail at vice,
Dissemble, lye, and preach like any priest.
Art thou a bawd?

CHAPLAIN.

Sir, I'm not often us'd thus.

CHAMONT.

Be just then.

CHAPLAIN.

So I shall be to the trust

That's laid upon me.

CHAMONT.

By the reverenc'd soul

Of that great honest man that gave me being,
Tell me but what thou know'st concerns my honour,
And if I e'er reveal it to thy wrong,
May this good sword ne'er do me right in battle!
May I ne'er know that blessed peace of mind,

That dwells in good and pious men like thee !

CHAPLAIN.

I see your temper's mov'd, and I will trust you.

CHAMONT.

Wilt thou ?

CHAPLAIN.

I will. But if it ever 'scape you——

CHAMONT.

It never shall.

CHAPLAIN.

Swear then.

CHAMONT.

I do by all

That's dear to me, by th' honour of my name,
And that dread Power I serve, it never shall.

CHAPLAIN.

Then this good day, when all the house was busy,
When mirth and kind rejoicing fill'd each room,
As I was walking in the grove I met them.

CHAMONT.

What, met them in the grove together ? tell me,
How, walking, standing, sitting, lying, hah !

CHAPLAIN.

I by their own appointment met them there,
Receiv'd their marriage vows, and join'd their hands.

CHAMONT.

How ! marry'd !

CHAPLAIN.

Yes, Sir.

CHAMONT.

Then my soul's at peace :
But why would you delay so long to give it ?

CHAPLAIN.

Not knowing what reception it may find
With old *Acasto*; may be I was too cautious
To trust the secret from me.

CHAMONT.

What's the cause
I cannot guess, tho' 'tis my sister's honour,
I do not like this marriage,
Huddled i' th' dark, and done at too much venture :
The business looks with an unlucky face.
Keep still the secret, for it ne'er shall 'scape me,
Not even to them, the new-match'd pair. Farewel.
Believe my truth, and know me for thy friend. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CASTALIO, and MONIMIA.

CASTALIO.

Young *Chamont*, and the Chaplain ! sure 'tis they !
No matter what's contriv'd, or who consulted,
Since my *Monimia*'s mine, tho' this sad look
Seems no good boding omen to her bliss,
Else, pr'ythee, tell me why that look cast down ?
Why that sad sigh as if thy heart were breaking ?

MONIMIA.

Castalio, I am thinking what we've done.
The heavenly powers are sure displeas'd to-day ?
For at the ceremony as we stood,
And as your hand was kindly join'd with mine,

As the good Priest pronounc'd the sacred words,
 Passion grew big, and I could not forbear,
 Tears drown'd my eyes, and trembling seiz'd my soul.
 What should that mean?

CASTALIO.

Oh thou art tender all !
 Gentle and kind as sympathizing nature !
 When a sad story has been told, I've seen
 Thy little breasts, with soft compassion swell'd,
 Shove up and down, and heave like dying birds.
 But now let fear be banish'd, think no more
 Of danger, for there's safety in my arms ;
 Let them receive thee : heav'n grows jealous now ;
 Sure she's too good for any mortal creature !
 I could grow wild, and praise thee ev'n to madness.
 But wherefor do I dally with my bliss ?
 The night's far spent, and day draws on apace ;
 To bed, my love, and wake till I come thither.

POLYDOR.

So hot, my brother ? [Polydore at the door.]

MONIMIA.

'Twill be impossible :

You know your father's chamber's next to mine,
 And the least noise will certainly alarm him.

CASTALIO.

Impossible ! impossible ! alas !
 Is't possible to live one hour without thee ?
 Let me behold those eyes ; they'll tell me truth.
 Hast thou no longing ? Art thou still the same

Cold icy virgin? No; thou'rt alter'd quite.
Haste, haste to bed, and let loose all thy wishes.

MONIMIA.

'Tis but one night, my lord; I pray be rul'd.

CASTALIO.

Try if thou'ast power to stop a flowing tide,
Or in a tempest make the seas be calm;
And when that's done I'll conquer my desires.
No more, my blessing. What shall be the sign?
When shall I come? For to my joys I'll steal,
As if I ne'er had paid my freedom for them.

MONIMIA.

Just three soft strokes upon the chamber-door;
And at that signal you shall gain admittance:
But speak not the least word; for if you should,
'Tis surely heard, and all will be betray'd.

CASTALIO.

Oh! doubt it not, *Monimia*; our joys
Shall be as silent as th' extatic bliss
Of souls that by intelligence converse:
Immortal pleasures shall our senses drown,
Thought shall be lost, and ev'ry pow'r dissolv'd:
Away, my love; first take this kiss. Now haste.
I long for that to come, yet grudge each minute past

[Exit Mon

My brother wand'ring too so late this way!

POLYDOR.

Castalio!

CASTALIO.

My *Polydore*, how dost thou?
How does our father? is he well recover'd?

POLYDORE.

I left him happily repos'd to rest;
He's still as gay as if his life were young.
But how does fair *Monimia*?

CASTALIO.

Doubtless well.
A cruel beauty, with her conquest pleas'd,
Is always joyful, and her mind in health.

POLYDORE.

Is she the same *Monimia* still she was?
May we not hope she's made of mortal mould?

CASTALIO.

She is not woman else:
Tho' I'm grown weary of this tedious hoping;
We've in a barren desert stray'd too long.

POLYDORE.

Yet may relief be unexpected found.
And love's sweet manna cover all the field.
Met ye to-day?

CASTALIO.

No, she has still avoided me.
Her brother too is jealous of her grown,
And has been hinting something to my father.
I wish I'd never meddled with the matter;
And would enjoin thee, *Polydore*—

POLYDORE.

To what?

CASTALIO.

To leave this peevish beauty to her self.

POLYDORE.

What! quit my love? as soon I'd quit my post
In fight, and like a coward run away.
No, by my stars, I'll chase her 'till she yields
To me, or meets her rescue in another.

CASTALIO.

Nay, she has beauty that might shake the leagues
Of mighty kings, and set the world at odds:
But I have wond'rous reasons on my side,
That would persuade thee, were they known.

POLYDORE.

Then speak 'em.

What are they? Came ye to her window here
To learn 'em now? *Castalio*, have a care;
Use honest dealing with your friend and brother.
Believe me, I'm not with my love so blinded,
But can discern your purpose to abuse me.
Quite your pretences to her.

CASTALIO.

Grant I do;

You love capitulations, *Polydore*,
And but upon conditions would oblige me.

POLYDORE.

You say, you've reasons. Why are they conceal'd?

T H E O R P H A N .

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CASTALIO.

To-morrow I may tell you.
It is a matter of such circumstance,
As I must well consult ere I reveal:
But, pr'ythee, cease to think I would abuse thee,
Till more be known.

POLYDORE.

When you, *Castalio*, cease
To meet *Monimia* unknown to me,
And then deny it slavishly, I'll cease
To think *Castalio* faithless to his friend.
Did I not see you part this very moment?

CASTALIO.

It seems you've watch'd me then?

POLYDORE.

I scorn the office.

CASTALIO.

Pr'ythee, avoid a thing thou may'st repent.

POLYDORE.

That is, henceforward making leagues with you.

CASTALIO.

Nay, if y'are angry, *Polydore*, good night. [*Exit.*

POLYDORE.

Good-night, *Castalio*, if y'are in such haste.
He little thinks I've overheard th' appointment:
But to his chamber's gone to wait a while,
Then come and take possession of my love.
This is the utmost point of all my hopes,
Or now she must or never can be mine.

T H E O R P H A N .

Oh! for a means now how to counterplot,
And disappoint this happy elder brother.
In every thing we do, or undertake,
He soars above me, mount what height I can,
And keeps the start he got of me in birth.
Cordelio!

Enter PAGE.

PAGE.

My lord!

POLYDORE.

Come hither, Boy.

Thou hast a pretty forward lying face,
And may'st in time expect preferment; canst thou
Pretend to secrecy, cajole and flatter
Thy master's follies, and assist his pleasures?

PAGE.

My lord, I could do any thing for you,
And ever be a very faithful boy.
Command, whate'er's your pleasure I'll observe.
Be it to run, or watch; or to convey
A letter to a beauteous lady's bosom;
At least I am not dull, and soon should learn.

POLYDORE.

'Tis pity then thou shouldst not be employ'd.
Go to my brother, he's in's chamber now
Undressing, and preparing for his rest;
Find out some means to keep him up a while:
Tell him a pretty story that may please
His ear: invent a tale, no matter what:

If he should ask of me, tell him I'm gone
To bed; and sent you there to know his pleasure
Whether he'll hunt to-morrow. Well said, *Polydore*;
Dissemble with thy brother! that's one point.
But do not leave him 'till he's in his bed;
Or if he chance to walk again this way,
Follow and do not quite him, but seem fond
To do him little offices of service.
Perhaps at last it may offend him; then
Retire, and wait 'till I come in. Away:
Succeed in this, and be employ'd again.

P A G E.

Doubt not, my lord; he has been always kind
To me; would often set me on his knee;
Then gave me sweetmeats, call me pretty boy,
And ask me what the maids talk'd of at nights.

P O L Y D O R E.

Run quickly then, and prosperous be thy wishes.

[Exit Page.]

Here I'm alone and fit for mischief; now
To cheat this brother, will't be honest that?
I heard the sign she order'd him to give.
Oh for the art of *Prateus*, but to change
The happy *Polydore* to blest *Castalio*!
She's not so well acquainted with him yet,
But I may fit her arms as well as he.
Then when I'm happily possess'd of more
Than sense can think, all loosen'd into joy,
To hear my disappointed brother come,

And give the unregarded signal; Oh!
 What a malicious pleasure will that be!
 Just three soft strokes upon the chamber-door:
 But speak not the least word; for if you should,
 'Tis surely heard, and we are both betray'd.
 How I adore a mistress that contrives
 With care to lay the business of her joys!
 One that has wit to charm the very soul,
 And give a double relish to delight!
 Blest Heav'ns! assist me but in this dear hour,
 And my kind stars be but propitious now,
 Dispose of me hereafter as you please.

Monimia! Monimia! [Gives the sign.

[Maid at the window.] Who's there?

POLYDORE.

'Tis I.

MAID.

My lord *Castilio*?

POLYDORE.

The same.

How does my love, my dear *Monimia*?

MAID.

Oh!

She wonders much at your unkind delay;
 You've staid so long that each little noise
 The wind but makes, she asks if you are coming.

POLYDORE.

Tell her I'm here, and let the door be open'd.

[Maid descends.

Now boast, *Castalio*, triumph now and tell
Thyself strange stories of a promis'd bliss.

[*The door unbolts.*

It opens, hah! what means my trembling flesh!
Limbs, do your office and support me well,
Bear me to her, then fail me if you can. [*Exit.*

Enter CASTALIO and PAGE.

PAGE.

Indeed, my lord, 'twill be a lovely morning.
Pray let us hunt.

CASTALIO.

Go, you're an idle pratler,
I'll stay at home to-morrow; if your lord
Thinks fit, he may command my hounds: go leave me,
I must to bed.

PAGE.

I'll wait upon your lordship,
If you think fit, and sing you to repose.

CASTALIO.

No, my kind boy, the night is too far wasted,
My senses too are quite disrob'd of thought,
And ready all with me to go to rest.
Good-night: commend me to my brother.

PAGE.

Oh!

You never heard the last new song I learn'd;
It is the finest, prettiest song indeed,
Of my lord and my lady you know who,
That were caught together, you know where.

My lord, indeed it is.

CASTALIO.

You must be whipt, youngster, if you get
Such songs as those are.——

What means this boy's impertinence to-night?

PAGE.

Why, what must I sing, pray, my dear lord?

CASTALIO.

Psalms, child, psalms.

PAGE.

Oh dear me! boys that go to school learn psalms,
But pages, that are better bred, sing lampoons.

CASTALIO.

Well, leave me; I am weary.

PAGE.

Oh! but you promis'd me last time I told you what
colour my lady *Monimia's* stockings were of, and that
she garter'd them above knee, that you would give
me a little horse to go a hunting upon, so you did;
I'll tell you no more stories, except you keep your
word with me.

CASTALIO.

Well go, you triffer, and to-morrow ask me.

PAGE.

Indeed, my lord, I can't abide to leave you.

CASTALIO.

Why, wert thou instructed to attend me?

PAGE.

No, no, indeed, my lord, I was not:

But I know what I know.

CASTALIO.

[mean?

What dost thou know! death! what can all this

PAGE.

Oh! I know who loves some-body.

CASTALIO.

What's that to me, boy?

PAGE.

Nay, and I know who loves you too.

CASTALIO.

That's a wonder, pr'ythee tell it me.

PAGE.

'Tis——'tis——I know who——

But will you give me the horse then?

CASTALIO.

I will, my child.

PAGE.

It is my lady *Monimia*, look you; but don't you tell her I told you, she'll give me no more play-things then. I heard her say so as she lay a-bed, man.

CASTALIO.

Talk'd she of me when in her bed, *Cordelio*?

PAGE.

Yes, and I sung her the song you made too;
And she did so sigh, and so look with her eyes;
And her breasts did so lift up and down; I could have found in my heart to have beat 'em, for they made me asham'd.

CASTALIO.

Hark, What's that noise?
 Take this, be gone, and leave me.
 You knave, you little flatterer, get you gone. [*Ex. Pag*
 Surely it was a noise. Hift——only fancy.
 For all is hush'd, as nature were retir'd,
 And the perpetual motion standing still,
 So much she from her work appears to cease;
 And every warring element's at peace;
 All the wild herds are in their coverts couch'd;
 The fishes to their banks or ooze repair'd,
 And to the murmurs of the waters sleep;
 The feeling air's at rest, and feels no noise,
 Except of some soft breaths among the trees,
 Rocking the harmless birds that rest upon 'em.
 'Tis now that, guided by my love, I go
 To take possession of *Monimia's* arms.
 Sure *Polydore's* by this time gone to bed.
 At midnight thus the us'rer steals untrack'd,
 To make a visit to his hoarded gold,
 And feasts his eyes upon the shining mammon. [*Knoc*
 She hears me not, sure she already sleeps.
 Her wishes could not brook so long delay,
 And her poor heart has beat itself to rest. [*knocks aga*
Monimia! my angel—hah—not yet—
 How long's the softest moment of delay
 To a heart impatient of its pangs like mine,
 In sight of ease, and panting to the goal? *Knocks aga*
 Once more——

MAID.

Who's there,
That comes thus rudely to disturb our rest?

CASTALIO.

'Tis I.

MAID.

Who are you, what's your name?

CASTALIO,

Suppose

The lord *Castalio*.

MAID.

I know you not.

The lord *Castalio* has no business here.

CASTALIO.

Hah! have a care; what can this mean?
Whoe'er thou art, I charge thee to *Monimia* fly;
Tell her I'm here, and wait upon my doom.

MAID.

Whoe'er ye are, ye may repent this outrage,
My lady must not be disturb'd. Good-night!

CASTALIO.

She must, tell her she shall; go, I'm in haste,
And bring her tidings from the state of love;
They're all in consultation met together,
How to reward my truth, and crown her vows.

MAID.

Sure the man's mad.

CASTALIO.

Or this will make me so:

K

Obey me, or by all the wrongs I suffer,
 I'll scale the window, and come in by force,
 Let the sad consequence be what it will.
 This creature's trifling folly makes me mad.

MAID.

My lady's answer is, you may depart,
 She says she knows you: you are *Polydore*,
 Sent by *Castalio*, as you were to-day,
 T'affront and do her violence again.

CASTALIO.

I'll not believe't.

MAID.

You may, Sir.

CASTALIO.

Curses blast thee.

MAID.

Well, 'tis a fine cool evening; and I hope
 May cure the raging fever in your blood.
 Good-night.

CASTALIO.

And farewell all that's just in woman!
 This is contriv'd, a studied trick t'abuse
 My easy nature, and torment my mind.
 Sure now she's bound me fast, and means to lord it
 To rein me hard, and ride me at her will,
 Till by degrees she shape me into fool
 For all her future uses. Death and torment!
 'Tis impudence to think my soul will bear it.
 Oh, I could grow ev'n wild, and tear my hair!

'Tis well, *Monimia*, that thy empire's short;
Let but to-morrow, but to-morrow come,
And try if all thy arts appease my wrong;
Till when, be this detested place my bed, [*Lies down.*
Where I will ruminate on woman's ills,
Laugh at myself, and curse th'inconstant sex.
Faithless *Monimia*! Oh *Monimia*!

Enter ERNESTO.

ERNESTO.

Either

My sense has been deluded, or this way,
I heard the sound of sorrow; 'tis late at night,
And none whose mind's at peace, would wander now.

CASTALIO.

Who's there?

ERNESTO.

A friend.

CASTALIO.

If thou art so, retire,
And leave this place, for I would be alone.

ERNESTO.

Castalio! My lord, why in this posture,
Stretch'd on the ground? Your honest true old servant,
Your poor *Ernesto* cannot see you thus;
Rise, I beseech you.

CASTALIO.

If thou art *Ernesto*,

As by thy honesty thou seem'st to be,
Once leave me to my folly.

ERNESTO.

I can't leave you,
And not the reason know of your disorders.
Remember how when young I in my arms
Have often born you, pleas'd you in your pleasures,
And fought an early share in your affection.
Do not discard me now, but let me serve you.

CASTALIO.

Thou canst not serve me.

ERNESTO.

Why?

CASTALIO.

Because my thoughts
Are full of woman; thou, poor wretch, are past 'em,

ERNESTO.

I hate the sex.

CASTALIO.

Then I'm thy friend, *Ernesto*. [*Rises*,
I'd leave the world for him that hates a woman.
Woman, the fountain of all human frailty!
What mighty ills have not been done by woman?
Who was't betray'd the capitol? A woman.
Who lost *Mark Antony* the world? A woman.
Who was the cause of a long ten years war,
And laid at last old *Troy* in ashes? Woman.
Destructive, damnable, deceitful woman!
Woman to man first as a blessing giv'n,
When innocence and love were in their prime;
Happy a while in Paradise they lay,

But quickly woman long'd to go astray;
Some foolish new adventure needs must prove,
And the first devil she saw, she chang'd her love;
To his temptations lewdly she inclin'd
Her soul, and for an apple damn'd mankind. *Ex.*

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

Enter ACASTO solus.

ACASTO.

BLEST be the morning that has brought me health;
A happy rest has soften'd pain away,
And I'll forget it, though my mind's not well.
A heavy melancholy clogs my heart,
I droop and sigh, I know not why. Dark dreams,
Sick fancy's children, have been over-busy,
And all the night play'd farces in my brains;
Methought I heard the mid-night raven cry;
Wak'd with th'imagin'd noise, my curtains seem'd
To start, and at my feet my sons appear'd
Like ghosts, all pale and stiff: I strove to speak,
But could not: suddenly the forms were lost,
And seem'd to vanish in a bloody cloud:
'Twas odd, and for the present shook my thoughts;
But 'twas th'effect of my distemper'd blood;
And when the health's disturb'd, the mind's unruly.

Enter POLYDORE.

Good morning, *Polydore*.

POLYDORE.

Heav'n keep your lordship.

ACASTO.

Have you yet seen *Castalio* to-day?

POLYDORE.

My lord, 'tis early day; he's hardly risen.

ACASTO.

Go, call him up, and meet me in the chapel.

[*Exit Polydore.*]

I cannot think all has gone well to-night;
For as I waking lay (and sure my sense
Was then my own) methought I heard my son
Castalio's voice; but it seem'd low and mournful,
Under my window too I thought I heard it;
M'untoward fancy could not be deceiv'd
In every thing; and I will search the truth out.

Enter MONIMIA, and her MAID.

Already up, *Monimia*! you rose
Thus early surely to out-shine the day!
Or was there any thing that cross'd your rest? [sleep.
They were naughty thoughts that could not let you

MONIMIA.

Whatever are my thoughts, my lord, I've learnt
By your example to correct their ills,
And morn, and evening, give up the account.

ACASTO.

Your pardon, sweet-one, I upbraid you not;

Or if I would, you are so good I could not.
 Though I'm deceiv'd, or you're more fair to day;
 For beauty's heighten'd in your cheeks, and all
 Your charms seem up, and ready in your eyes.

MONIMIA.

The little share I have's so very mean,
 That it may easily admit addition;
 Though you, my lord, should most of all beware
 To give it too much praise, and make me proud.

ACASTO.

Proud of an old man's praises! No, *Monimia!*
 But if my prayers can work thee any good,
 Thou shalt not want the largest share of 'em:
 Heard you no noise to-night?

MONIMIA.

Noise! my good lord!

ACASTO.

Ay! about midnight.

MONIMIA.

Indeed, my lord, I don't remember any.

ACASTO.

You must sure! went you early to your rest?

MONIMIA.

About the wonted hour. Why this enquiry? [*Aside.*]

ACASTO.

And went your maid to bed too?

MONIMIA.

My lord, I guess so;
 I've seldom known her disobey my orders.

ACASTO.

Sure Goblins then or Fairies haunt the dwelling;
 I'll have enquiry made through all the house,
 But I'll find out the cause of these disorders.
 Good-day to thee, *Monimia*—I'll to chapel. [Exit.

MONIMIA.

I'll but dispatch some orders to my woman,
 And wait upon your lordship there.
 I fear the Priest has play'd us false; if so,
 My poor *Castalio* loses all for me.
 I wonder though, he made such haste to leave me;
 Was't not unkind, *Florella*! surely 'twas!
 He scarce afforded one kind parting word,
 But went away so cold: the kiss he gave me
 Seem'd the forc'd compliment of fated love.
 Would I had never marry'd!

MAID.

Why?

MONIMIA.

Methinks

The scene's quite alter'd; I am not the same;
 I've bound up for myself a weight of cares,
 And how the burden will be borne, none knows.
 A husband may be jealous, rigid, false;
 And should *Castalio* e'er prove so to me;
 So tender is my heart, so nice my love,
 'Twould ruin and distract my rest for ever.

MAID.

Madam, he's coming.

MONIMIA.

Where, *Florella*? where?

returning? to my chamber lead;
 at him there; the mysteries of our love
 be kept private, as religious rites,
 he unhallow'd view of common eyes.

[*Exeunt Mon. and Maid.*]

Enter CASTALIO.

CASTALIO.

I'd morning's come! And now upon the plains
 stant mountains, where they feed their flocks,
 appy shepherds leave their homely huts,
 ith their pipes proclaim the new-born day.
 sty swain comes with his well-fill'd scrip
 ithful viands, which when hunger calls,
 such content and appetite he eats,
 ow in the fields his daily toil,
 efs the grateful gleb, that yields him fruits.
 afts, that under the warm hedges slept,
 eather'd out the cold bleak night, are up,
 oking towards the neighb'ring pastures, raise
 oice, and bid their fellow brutes good-morrow.
 earful birds too, on the tops of trees,
 le all in quires, and with their notes
 and welcome up the rising sun.
 s no condition sure so curs'd as mine;
 rry'd! 'Sdeath! I'm sped. How like a dog
 . *Hercules*, thus to a distaff chain'd?
 ia! oh *Monimia*!

L

Enter MONIMIA, and MAID.

MONIMIA.

I come,

I fly to my ador'd *Castalio*'s arms,

My wish'd-for lord. May every morn begin
Like this; and with our days our loves renew.

Now I may hope you are satisfy'd——

[*Looking languishingly on him.*]

CASTALIO.

I am

Well satisfy'd, that thou art—— Oh——

MONIMIA.

What? speak:

Art thou not well, *Castalio*? Come, lean
Upon my breast, and tell me where's thy pain.

CASTALIO.

'Tis here! 'tis in my head; 'tis in my heart,
'Tis every where; it rages like a madness;
And I most wonder how my reason holds;
Nay, wonder not, *Monimia*: the slave
You thought you had secur'd within my breast,
Is grown a rebel, and has broke his chain,
And now he walks there like a lord at large.

MONIMIA.

Am I not then your wife, your lov'd *Monimia*?
I once was so, or I've most strangely dream't.
What ails my love?

CASTALIO.

Whate'er thy dreams have been,

Thy waking thoughts ne'er meant *Castalio* well.
No more, *Monimia*, of your sex's arts,
They're uselefs all: I'm not that pliant tool,
That necessary utensil you'd make me,
I know my charter better — I am man,
Obstinate man; and will not be enslav'd.

MONIMIA.

You shall not fear't: indeed my nature's easy,
I'll ever live your most obedient wife,
Nor ever any privilege pretend
Beyond your will; for that shall be my law;
Indeed I will not.

CASTALIO.

Nay, you shall not, madam;
By yon bright heav'n, you shall not; all the day
I'll play the tyrant, and at night forsake thee;
Till by afflictions and continued cares,
I've worn thee to a homely household drudge:
Nay, if I've any too, thou shalt be made
Subservient to all my looser pleasures,
For thou hast wrong'd *Castalio*.

MONIMIA.

No more:

Oh kill me here, or tell me my offence,
I'll never quit you else; but on these knees,
Thus follow you all day, 'till they're worn bare,
And hang upon you like a drowning creature,
Castalio——

CASTALIO.

Away; last night, last night.

MONIMIA.

It was our wedding-night.

CASTALIO.

No more, forget it.

MONIMIA.

Why? Do you then repent?

CASTALIO.

I do.

MONIMIA.

Oh Heav'n!

And will you leave me thus? help, help, *Florella*.

[*He drags her to the door, and breaks from her.*

Help me to hold this yet lov'd cruel man.

Oh my heart breaks—I'm dying, Oh—stand off;

I'll not indulge this woman's weakness; still

Chast, and fomented, let my heart swell on,

Till with its injuries it burst, and shake

With the dire blow this prison to the earth.

MAID.

What sad mistake has been the cause of this?

MONIMIA.

Castalio: Oh! how often has he swore,

Nature should change, the sun and stars grow dark,

Ere he would falsify his vows to me!

Make haste, confusion, then: sun, lose thy light,

And stars drop dead with sorrow to the earth;

For my *Castalio's* false.

MAID.

Unhappy day !

MONIMIA.

False as the wind, the water, or the weather;
Cruel as Tygers o'er their trembling prey ;
I feel him in my breast, he tears my heart,
And at each sigh he drinks the gushing blood ;
Must I be long in pain ?

Enter CHAMONT.

CHAMONT.

In tears, *Monimia*!

MONIMIA.

Whoe'er thou art, ,
Leave me alone to my belov'd despair.

CHAMONT.

Lift up thy eyes, and see who comes to cheer thee.
Tell me the story of thy wrongs, and then
See if my soul has rest till thou hast justice.

MONIMIA.

My brother!

CHAMONT.

Yes, *Monimia*, if thou think'st

That I deserve the name, I am thy brother.

MONIMIA.

Oh *Castalio*!

CHAMONT.

Hah !

Name me that name again ! my soul's on fire
Till I know all : there's meaning in that name.

86 T H E O R P H A N.

I know he is thy husband : therefor trust me
With all the following truth———

MONIMIA.

Indeed *Chamont*,
There nothing in it but the fault of nature :
I'm often thus seiz'd suddenly with grief,
I know not why.

CHAMONT.

You use me ill, *Monimia*;
And I might think with justice most severely
Of this unfaithful dealing with your brother.

MONIMIA.

Truly I'm not to blame : suppose I'm fond,
And grieve for what as much may please another ?
Should I upbraid the dearest friend on earth
For the first fault ? you would not do so : would you ?

CHAMONT.

Not, if I'd cause to think it was a friend.

MONIMIA.

Why do you then call this unfaithful dealing ?
I ne'er conceal'd my soul from you before :
Bear with me now, and search my wounds no farther,
For every probing pains me to the heart.

CHAMONT.

'Tis sign there's danger, and must be prevented.
Where's your new husband ? Still that thought disturbs
What ! only answer me with tears ? *Castalio* ! [you,
Nay, now they stream,
Cruel unkind *Castalio* ! Is't not so ?

MONIMIA.

I cannot speak, grief flows so fast upon me,
It chokes, and will not let me tell the cause.

CHAMONT.

Oh, my *Monimia*, to my soul thou'rt dear,
As honour to my name : dear as the light
To eyes but just restor'd, and heal'd of blindness:
Why wilt thou not repose within my breast
The anguish that torments thee ?

MONIMIA.

Oh ! I dare not.

CHAMONT.

I have no friends but thee : we must confide
In one another : two unhappy orphans,
Alas, we are ; and when I see thee grieve,
Methinks it is a part of me that suffers.

MONIMIA.

Oh shouldst thou know the cause of my lamenting,
I'm satisfy'd, *Chamont*, that thou would'st scorn me ;
Thou would'st despise the abject lost *Monimia* ;
No more would'st praise this hated beauty ; but
When in some cell, distracted, as I shall be,
Thou see'st me lie ; these unregarded locks
Matted like furies tresses ; my poor limbs
Chain'd to the ground, and 'stead of the delights
Which happy lovers taste, my keeper's stripes,
A bed of straw, and a coarse wooden dish
Of wretched sustenance ; when thus thou seest me,

Pr'ythee have charity and pity for me.
Let me enjoy this thought.

CHAMONT.

Why wilt thou rack
My soul so long, *Monimia*? Ease me quickly;
Or thou wilt run me into madness first.

MONIMIA.

Could you be secret?

CHAMONT.

Secret as the grave.

MONIMIA.

But when I've told you, will you keep your fury
Within its bounds? Will you not do some rash
And horrid mischief? for indeed, *Chamont*,
You would not think how hardly I've been us'd
From a near friend; from one that has my soul
A slave, and therefor treats it like a tyrant.

CHAMONT.

I will be calm; but has *Castalio* wrong'd thee?
Has he already wasted all his love?
What has he done? quickly; for I'm all tremblin
With expectation of a horrid tale.

MONIMIA.

Oh! could you think it!

CHAMONT.

What?

MONIMIA.

I fear he'll kill me.

CHAMONT.

Hah!

MONIMIA.

Indeed I do; he's strangely cruel to me,
Which if it lasts, I'm sure must break my heart.

CHAMONT.

What has he done?

MONIMIA.

Most barbarously us'd me:
Nothing so kind as he, when in my arms;
In thousand kisses, tender sighs and joys,
Not to be thought again, the night was wasted;
At dawn of day, he rose, and left his conquest.
But when we met, and I with open arms
Ran to embrace the lord of all my wishes,
Oh then!

CHAMONT.

Go on!

MONIMIA.

He threw me from his breast,
Like a detested sin.

CHAMONT.

How?

MONIMIA.

As I hung too
Upon his knees, and begg'd to know the cause,
He dragg'd me like a slave upon the earth,
And had no pity on my cries.

M

CHAMONT.

How! did he
Dash thee disdainfully away with scorn!

MONIMIA.

He did; and more I fear will ne'er be friends,
Though I still love him with unabated passion.

CHAMONT.

What, throw thee from him!

MONIMIA.

Yes, indeed he did.

CHAMONT.

So may this arm
Throw him to th' earth, like a dead dog despis'd:
Lameness and leprosy, blindness and lunacy,
Poverty, shame, pride, and the name of villain
Light on me, if *Castalio*, I forgive thee.

MONIMIA.

Nay, now, *Chamont*, art thou unkind as he is?
Didst thou not promise me thou wouldst be calm?
Keep my disgrace conceal'd? why shouldst thou kill him?
By all my love, this arm should do him vengeance.
Alas, I love him still, and though I ne'er
Clasp him again within these longing arms,
Yet bless him, bless him (Gods) where-e'er he goes.

Enter ACASTO.

ACASTO.

Sure some ill fate is tow'rd's me; in my house
I only meet with oddness and disorder;
Each vassal has a wild distracted face;

And looks as full of business as a blockhead
In times of danger: just this very moment
I met *Castalio* too——

CHAMONT.

Then you met a villain.

ACASTO.

Hah!

CHAMONT.

Yes, a villain.

ACASTO.

Have a care, young foldier,
How thou'rt too busy with *Acasto's* fame;
I have a sword, my arm's good old acquaintance.
Villain to thee——

CHAMONT.

Curse on thy scandalous age,
Which hinders me to rush upon thy throat,
And tear the root up of that curfed bramble!

ACASTO.

Ungrateful ruffian! sure my good old friend
Was ne'er thy father: nothing of him's in thee:
What have I done in my unhappy age,
To be thus us'd? I scorn to upbraid thee, boy,
But I could put thee in remembrance——

CHAMONT.

Do,

ACASTO.

I scorn it——

CHAMONT.

No, I'll calmly hear the story.

For I would fain know all, to see which scale
Weighs most—Hah, is not that good old *Acasto*?
What have I done? Can you forgive this folly?

ACASTO.

Why, dost thou ask it?

CHAMONT.

'Twas the rude o'erflowing
Of too much passion; pray, my lord, forgive me. [*kneels*.

ACASTO.

Mock me not, Youth; I can revenge a wrong.

CHAMONT.

I know it well; but for this thought of mine,
Pity a mad-man's frenzy and forget it.

ACASTO.

I will; but henceforth, pr'ythee be more kind.

[*Raises him.*

Whence come the cause?

CHAMONT.

Indeed I've been to blame,
But I'll learn better; for you've been my father:
You've been her father too— [*Takes Mon. by the hand.*

ACASTO.

Forbear the Prologue—
And let me know the substance of thy tale.

CHAMONT.

You took her up a little tender flower,
Just sprouted on a bank, which the next frost
Had nipt: and with a careful loving hand,
Transplanted her into your own fair garden,
Where the sun always shine: there long she flourish'd,

Grew sweet to sense, and lovely to the eye,
'Till at the last a cruel spoiler came,
Cropt this fair rose, and rifled all its sweetness,
Then cast it like a loathsome weed away.

ACASTO.

You talk to me in parables; *Chamont*,
You may have known that I'm no wordy man;
Fine speeches are the instruments of knaves
Or fools, that use 'em when they want good sense;
But honesty
Needs no disguise nor ornament; be plain.

CHAMONT.

Your son——

ACASTO.

I've two, and both I hope have honour.

CHAMONT.

I hope so too——but——

ACASTO.

Speak.

CHAMONT.

I must inform you,

Once more, *Castalio*——

ACASTO.

Still, *Castalio*?

CHAMONT.

Yes,

Your son *Castalio* has wrong'd *Monimia*.

ACASTO.

Hah! wrong'd her?

CHAMONT.

Marry'd her.

ACASTO.

I'm sorry for't.

CHAMONT.

Why sorry?

By yon blest heav'n, there's not a le
But might be proud to take her to his heart.

ACASTO.

I'll not deny't.

CHAMONT.

You dare not, by the gods,
You dare not; all your family, combin'd
In one damn'd falshood to out-do *Castalio*,
Dare not deny't.

ACASTO.

How has *Castalio* wrong'd her?

CHAMONT.

Ask that of him: I say, my sister's wrong'd:
Monimia, my sister, born as high
And noble as *Castalio*——Do her justice,
Or by the gods, I'll lay a scene of blood,
Shall make this dwelling horrible to nature.
I'll do't; hark you, my lord, your son *Castalio*,
Take him to your closet, and there teach him manne

ACASTO.

You shall have justice.

CHAMONT.

Nay—I will have justice.

Who'll sleep in safety that has done me wrong?
My lord, I'll not disturb you to repeat
The cause of this; I beg you (to preserve
Your house's honour) ask it of *Castalio*.

ACASTO.

I will.

CHAMONT.

'Till then farewell—

[*Exit.*

ACASTO.

Farewell, proud boy.

Monimia.

MONIMIA.

My lord.

ACASTO.

You are my daughter.

MONIMIA.

I am, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe to own me.

ACASTO.

When you'll complain to me, I'll prove a father [*Ex.*

MONIMIA.

Now I'm undone for ever: who on earth
Is there so wretched as *Monimia*?
First by *Castalio* cruelly forsaken;
I've lost *Acasto* now: his parting frowns
May well instruct me, rage is in his heart;
I shall be next abandon'd to my fortune,
'Thrust out a naked wand'rer to the world,
And branded for the mischievous *Monimia*.
What will become of me? My cruel brother

Is framing mischiefs too, for ought I know,
 That may produce bloodshed, and horrid murder:
 I would not be the cause of one man's death,
 To reign the Empress of the earth; nay, more,
 I'd rather lose for ever my *Castalio*,
 My dear unkind *Castalio*.

Enter POLYDORE.

POLYDORE.

Monimia weeping!

So morning dews on new-blown roses lodge,
 By the sun's amorous heat to be exhal'd.
 I come, my love, to kiss all sorrow from thee.
 What mean these sighs? and why thus beats thy heart?

MONIMIA.

Let me alone to sorrow: 'tis a cause
 None e'er shall know: but it shall with me die.

POLYDORE.

Happy, *Monimia*, he to whom these sighs,
 These tears, and all these languishings are paid!
 I am no stranger to your dearest secret;
 I know your heart was never meant for me.
 That jewel's for an elder brother's price.

MONIMIA.

My lord!

POLYDORE.

Nay, wonder not; last night I heard
 His oaths, your vows, and to my torment saw
 Your wild embraces: heard the appointment made:
 I did, *Monimia*, and I curst the sound.

Wilt thou be sworn, my love? will thou be ne'er
Unkind again?

MONIMIA.

Banish such fruitless hopes!

Have you sworn constancy to my undoing?

Will you be ne'er my friend again?

POLYDOR.

What means, my love?

MONIMIA.

Away; what meant my lord
Last night?

POLYDOR.

Is that a question now to be demanded?

I hope *Monimia* was not much displeas'd.

MONIMIA.

Was it well done to treat me like a prostitute,

T'assault my lodging at the dead of night,

And threaten me, if I deny'd admittance:—

You said you were *Castalio*—

POLYDOR.

By those eyes

It was the same; I spent my time much better;

I tell thee, ill-natur'd fair one, I was posted

To more advantage on a pleasant hill

Of springing joy, and everlasting sweetness.

MONIMIA.

Hah—have a care—

POLYDOR.

Where is the danger near me?

N

MONIMIA.

I fear you're on a rock will wreck your quiet;
And drown your soul in wretchedness for ever;
A thousand horrid thoughts crowd on my memory.
Will you be kind, and answer me one question?

POLYDORE.

I'd trust thee with my life; on those soft breasts
Breathe out the choicest secrets of my heart;
'Till I had nothing in it left but love.

MONIMIA.

Nay, I'll conjure you by the gods and angels,
By the honour of your name, that's most concern'd,
To tell me, *Polydore*, and tell me truly,
Where did you rest last night?

POLYDORE.

Within thy arms
I triumph'd: rest had been my foe.

MONIMIA.

'Tis done—— [*She faints.*]

POLYDORE.

She faints! No help! who waits? a curse
Upon my vanity, that could not keep
The secret of my happiness in silence.
Confusion! we shall be surpriz'd anon,
And consequently all must be betray'd,
Monimia! she breathes—*Monimia!*——

MONIMIA.

Well——

Let mischiefs multiply! let every hour

loath'd life yield me increase of horror!
 the sun to these unhappy eyes
 shine again, but be eclips'd for ever!
 every thing I look on seem a prodigy,
 my soul with terrors, 'till I quite
 I ever had humanity,
 now a curser of the works of nature!

POLYDORE.

What means all this?

MONIMIA.

Oh, *Polydore*, if all
 friendship e'er you vow'd to good *Castalia*
 a falsehood, if you ever lov'd
 another, you've undone yourself and me.

POLYDORE.

Which way can ruin reach the man that's rich,
 when, in possession of my sweetness?

MONIMIA.

I'm his wife.

POLYDORE.

What says *Monimia*! hah!
 that again.

MONIMIA.

I am *Castalia*'s wife.

POLYDORE.

How marry'd, wedded wife?

MONIMIA.

Yesterday's fun
 perform'd.

POLYDORE.

And then have I enjoy'd
My brother's wife?

MONIMIA.

As sure as we both
Must taste of misery, that guilt is thine.

POLYDORE.

Must we be miserable then?

MONIMIA.

Oh!

POLYDORE.

Oh! thou may'st yet be happy?

MONIMIA.

Could'st thou be
Happy with such a weight upon thy soul?

POLYDORE.

It may be yet a secret: I'll go try
To reconcile and bring *Castalio* to thee,
Whilst from the world I take myself away,
And waste my life in penance for my sin.

MONIMIA.

Then thou would'st more undo me: heap a load
Of added sins upon my wretched head:
Would'st thou again have me betray thy brother,
And bring pollution to his arms? curst thought!
Oh when shall I be mad indeed!

POLYDORE.

Nay then
Let us embrace, and from this very moment

Vow an eternal misery together.

MONIMIA.

And wilt thou be a very faithful wretch?
Never grow fond of chearful peace again?
Wilt thou with me study to be unhappy,
And find out ways how to encrease affliction?

POLYDORE.

We'll institute new arts unknown before,
To vary plagues, and make them look like new ones.
First, if the fruit of our detested joy,
A child be born, it shall be murder'd——

MONIMIA.

No,

POLYDORE.

Why?

MONIMIA.

To become a thing
More wretched than its parents, to be branded
With all our infamy, and curse its birth.

POLYDORE.

That's well contriv'd; then thus let's go together,
Full of our guilt, distracted where to roam,
Like the first wretched pair expell'd their paradise.
Let's find some place where adders nest in winter,
Loathsome and venomous: where poisons hang
Like gums against the walls; where witches meet
By night, and feed upon some pamper'd Imp,
Fat with the blood of babes: there we'll inhabit,
And live up to the height of desperation;

Desire shall languish like a withering flower,
 And no distinction of the sex be thought of.
 Horrors shall fright me from those pleasing harms,
 And I'll no more be caught with beauty's charms,
 But when I'm dying take me in thy arms. [Ex.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

CASTALIO *lying on the ground.*

S O N G.

I.

COME, all ye youths, whose hearts e'er bled
 By cruel beauty's pride,
 Bring each a garland on his head,
 Let none his sorrows hide:
 But hand in hand around me move,
 Singing the saddest tales of love;
 And see when your complaints ye join,
 If all your wrongs can equal mine.

II.

The happiest mortal once was I,
 My heart no sorrows knew.
 Pity the pain with which I die,
 But ask not whence it grew.
 Yet if a tempting Fair you find
 That's very lovely, very kind,
 Tho' bright as Heav'n, whose stamp she bears,
 Think of my fate, and shun her snares.

CASTALIO.

See where the Deer trot after one another,
Male, female, father, daughter, mother, son,
Brother and sister, mingled all together ;
No discontent they know, but in delightful
Wildness and freedom, pleasant springs, fresh herbage,
Calm harbours, lusty health and innocence,
Enjoy their portion ; if they see a man,
How will they turn together all, and gaze
Upon the monster—
Once in a season too they taste of love ;
Only the beast of reason is its slave,
And in that folly drudges all the year.

Enter A C A S T O .

ACASTO.

Castalio! Castalio!

CASTALIO.

Who's there so wretched but to name *Castalio*?

ACASTO.

I hope my message may succeed.

CASTALIO.

My father,

'Tis joy to see you, though where sorrow's nourish'd.

ACASTO.

I'm come in beauty's cause ; you'll guess the rest.

CASTALIO.

A woman ! if you love my peace of mind,
Name not a woman to me ; but to think
Of woman were enough to taint my brains,

Till they ferment to madness! Oh! my father:

ACASTO.

What ails my boy?

CASTALIO.

A woman is the thing
I would forget, and blot from my remembrance.

ACASTO.

Forget *Monimia*!

CASTALIO.

She too chuse: *Monimia*
The very sound's ungrateful to my sense.

ACASTO.

This might seem strange; but you I've found will hide
Your heart from me; you dare not trust your father.

CASTALIO.

No more *Monimia*.

ACASTO.

Is she not your wife?

CASTALIO.

So much the worse: who loves to hear of wife!
When you would give all worldly plagues a name
Worse than they have already, call 'em wife:
But a new-married wife's a seeming mischief,
Full of herself: why, what a deal of horror
Has that poor wretch to come, that wedded yesterday!

ACASTO.

Castalio, you must go along with me,
And see *Monimia*.

CASTALIO.

Sure, my lord but mocks me :
: *Monimia*! Pray, my lord, excuse me ;
eave the conduct of this part of life
y own choice.

ACASTO.

I say, no more dispute.
laints are made to me, that you have wrong'd her.

CASTALIO.

ho has complain'd ?

ACASTO.

r brother to my fate proclaim'd her wrong'd ;
in such terms they've warm'd me.

CASTALIO.

at terms ? her brother ! Heav'n ! Where learnt she
, does she send her hero with defiance ? [that ?
rft not sure affront you ?

ACASTO.

No, not much,

CASTALIO.

Speak, what said he ?

ACASTO.

That thou wert a villain :
rks I would not have thee thought a villain.

CASTALIO.

me on th' ill-manner'd brute ; your age secur'd
rft not else have said so. [him,

ACASTO.

By my sword,
I would not see thee wrong'd, and bear it vilely:
Though I have past my word she shall have justice.

CASTALIO.

Justice! to give her justice wou'd undo her:
Think you this solitude I now have chosen,
Left joys just opening to my sense, sought here
A place to curse my fate in, measur'd out
My grave at length, wish'd to have grown one piec
With this cold clay, and all without a cause?

Enter CHAMONT.

CHAMONT.

Where is the hero famous and renown'd
For wronging innocence, and breaking vows;
Whose mighty spirit, and whose stubborn heart,
No woman can appease, nor man provoke?

ACASTO.

I guess, *Chamont*, you come to seek *Castalio*.

CHAMONT.

I come to seek the husband of *Monimia*.

CASTALIO.

The slave is here.

CHAMONT.

I thought ere now to have found you
Atoning for the ills you've done *Chamont* :
For you have wrong'd the dearest part of him.
Monimia, young lord, weeps in this heart;
And all the tears thy injuries have drawn

her poor eyes are drops of blood from hence.

CASTALIO.

en you're *Chamont*?

CHAMONT.

Yes, and I hope no stranger
eat *Castalio*.

CASTALIO.

I've heard of such a man
has been very busy with my honour:
I'm much indebted to you, Sir,
ere return the villain back again
ent me by my father.

CHAMONT.

Thus I'll thank you. [*Draws.*

ACASTO.

this good sword, who first presumes to violence

[*Draws and interposes.*

is me his foe—Young man, it once was thought,

[*To Castalio.*

fit guardian of my house's honour,

you might trust your share with me—For you

[*To Chamont.*

g soldier, I must tell you, you have wrong'd me:

nis'd you to do *Monimia* right;

hought my word a pledge, I would not forfeit:

ou, I find, would fright us to performance.

CASTALIO.

, in my younger years with care you taught me,
brave revenge was due to injur'd honour;

Oppose not then the justice of my sword,
Lest you should make me jealous of your love.

CHAMONT.

Into thy father's arms thou fly'st for safety,
Because thou know'st the place is sanctify'd,
With the remembrance of an ancient friendship.

CASTALIO.

I am a villain if I will not seek thee,
Till I may be reveng'd for all the wrongs
Done me by that ungrateful Fair thou plead'st for.

CHAMONT.

She wrong'd thee! by the fury in my heart,
Thy father's honour's not above *Monimia's*;
Nor was thy mother's truth and virtue fairer.

ACASTO.

Boy, don't disturb the ashes of the dead
With thy capricious follies: the remembrance
Of the lov'd creature, that once fill'd these arms——

CHAMONT.

Has not been wrong'd.

CASTALIO.

It shall not.

CHAMONT.

No, nor shall

Monimia, though a helpless orphan, destitute
Of friends and fortune, though th' unhappy sister
Of poor *Chamont*, whose sword is all his portion,
B'oppress'd by thee, thou proud imperious traitor.

CASTALIO,

Hah! let me free.

CHAMONT.

Come both.

Enter SERINA.

SERINA.

Alas! alas!

The cause of these disorders; my *Chamont*!

Who is't has wrong'd thee?

CASTALIO.

Now where art thou fled

For shelter?

CHAMONT.

Come from thine, and see what safeguard
Shall then betray my fears.

SERINA.

Cruel *Castalio*,

Sheathe up thy angry sword, and don't affright me:

Chamont, let once *Serina* calm thy breast;

If any of my friends have done thee injuries,

I'll be reveng'd, and love thee better for't.

CASTALIO.

Sir, if you'd have me think you did not take
This opportunity to shew your vanity,
Let's meet some other time, when by ourselves
We fairly may dispute our wrongs together.

CHAMONT.

Till then, I am *Castalio's* friend.

CASTALIO.

Serina,

Farewel, I wish much happiness attend you.

SERINA.

Chamont's the dearest thing I have on earth;
Give me *Chamont*, and let the world forsake me.

CHAMONT.

Witness the gods, how happy I'm in thee!
No beauteous blossom of the fragrant spring,
Though the fair child of nature newly born,
Can be so lovely. Angry, unkind *Castalio*,
Suppose I should awhile lay by my passions,
And be a beggar in *Monimia's* cause
Might I be heard?

CASTALIO.

Sir, 'twas my last request,
You wou'd (though you I find will not) be satisfy'd:
So in a word, *Monimia* is my scorn;
She basely sent you here to try my fears;
That was your business,
No artful prostitute, in falsehoods practis'd
To make advantage of her coxcomb's follies,
Could have done more—Disquiet vex her for't.

CHAMONT.

Farewel.

[*Ex. Cham. and Ser*

CASTALIO.

Farewel—My father, you seem troubled.

ACASTO.

Would I'd been absent when this boist'rous Brave

disturb thee thus: I'm griev'd I hinder'd
: resentment—— But *Monimia*——

* CASTALIO.

Damn her.

ACASTO

curse her.

CASTALIO.

Did I?

ACASTO.

Yes.

CASTALIO.

I'm sorry for't.

ACASTO.

nks; as if I guess the fault's but small,
: be pardon'd.

CASTALIO.

No.

ACASTO.

Go see her.

CASTALIO.

No.

ACASTO.

id and bring her hither.

CASTALIO.

No.

ACASTO.

For my sake,
and the quiet of my age.

CASTALIO.

Why will you urge a thing my nature starts at?

ACASTO.

Pr'ythee forgive her.

CASTALIO.

Light'nings first shall blast me.

I tell you, were she prostrate at my feet,
Full of her sex's best dissembled sorrows,
And all that wond'rous beauty of her own,
My heart might break, but it should never soften.

Enter FLORELLA.

FLORELLA.

My lord, where are you? Oh *Castalio*!

ACASTO.

Hark.

CASTALIO.

What's that?

FLORELLA.

Oh shew me quickly, where's *Castalio*!

CASTALIO.

Why, what's the business?

FLORELLA.

Oh the poor *Menimia*!

CASTALIO.

Hah!

ACASTO.

What's the matter?

FLORELLA.

Hurry'd by despair,

She flies with fury over all the house,
Through every room of each apartment, crying,
Where's my *Castalio*? give me my *Castalio*.
Except she sees you, sure she'll grow distracted.

CASTALIO.

Hah! will she? does she name *Castalio*?
And with such tendernefs? Conduct me quickly
To the poor lovely Mourner. Oh my father!

ACASTO.

Then wilt thou go? Blessings attend thy purpose.

CASTALIO.

I cannot hear *Monimia*'s soul in sadness,
And be a man; my heart will not forget her.
But do not tell the world you saw this of me.

ACASTO.

Delay not then, but haste and cheer thy love.

CASTALIO.

Oh I will throw m'impatient arms about her!
In her soft bosom sigh my soul to peace,
Till through the panting breast she finds the way
To mould my heart, and make it what she will.
Monimia! Oh! [Ex. Acast. Cast.]

Enter MONIMIA,

MONIMIA.

Stand off, and give me room,
I will not rest till I have found *Castalio*,
My wishes lord, comely as rising day,
Amidst ten thousand eminently known.
Flowers spring up where-e'er he treads, his eyes,

Fountains of brightness, chearing all about him!
 When will they shine on me?—Oh stay my soul!
 I cannot die in peace till I have seen him.

C A S T A L I O *re-enters.*

C A S T A L I O.

Who talks of dying with a voice so sweet,
 That life's in love with't?

M O N I M I A.

Hark! 'tis he that answers.
 So in a camp, though at the dead of night,
 If but the trumpet's chearful noise is heard,
 All at the signal leap from downy rest,
 And every heart awakes, as mine does now.
 Where art thou?

C A S T A L I O.

Here, my love.

M O N I M I A.

No nearer, lest I vanish.

C A S T A L I O.

Have I been in a dream then all this while!
 And art thou but the shadow of *Monimia*!
 Why dost thou fly me thus?

M O N I M I A.

Oh! were it possible that we could drown
 In dark oblivion but a few past hours,
 We might be happy.

C A S T A L I O.

Is't then so hard, *Monimia*, to forgive
 A fault, where humble love, like mine, implores thee

For I must love thee, though it prove my ruin.
Which way shall I court thee?
What shall I do to be enough thy slave,
And satisfy the lovely pride that's in thee.
I'll kneel to thee, and weep a flood before thee?
Yet pr'ythee, tyrant, break not quite my heart;
But when my task of penitence is done,
Heal it again, and comfort me with love.

MONIMIA.

If I am dumb, *Castalio*, and want words,
To pay thee back this mighty tenderness;
It is because I look on thee with horror,
And cannot see the man I so have wrong'd.

CASTALIO.

Thou hast not wrong'd me.

MONIMIA.

Ah! alas, thou talk'st
Just as thy poor heart thinks; have not I wrong'd thee?

CASTALIO.

No.

MONIMIA.

Still thou wander'st in the dark, *Castalio*;
But wilt ere long stumble on horrid danger.

CASTALIO.

What means my love!

MONIMIA.

Couldst thou but forgive me!

CASTALIO.

What!

MONIMIA.

For my fault last night; alas, thou canst not.

CASTALIO.

I can, and do.

MONIMIA.

Thus crawling on the earth
Would I that pardon meet; the only thing
Can make me view the face of Heav'n with hope.

CASTALIO.

Then let's draw near.

MONIMIA.

Ah me!

CASTALIO.

So in the fields;
When the destroyer has been out for prey,
The scatter'd lovers of the feather'd kind,
Seeking when danger's past to meet again,
Make moan, and call, by such degrees approach;
'Till joining thus, they bill, and spread their wings,
Murmuring love, and joy, their fears are over.

MONIMIA.

Yet have a care, be not too fond of peace,
Left in pursuance of the goodly quarry,
Thou meet a disappointment that distracts thee.

CASTALIO.

My better angel, then do thou inform me,
What danger threatens me, and where it lies:
Why didst thou (pr'ythee smile and tell me why)
When I stood waiting underneath the window,

Quaking with fierce and violent desires;
The drooping dews fell cold upon my head,
Darkness enclos'd, and the winds whistled round me;
Which with my mournful sighs made such sad music
As might have mov'd the hardest heart; why wert thou
Deaf to my cries, and senseless of my pains?

MONIMIA.

Did I not beg thee to forbear enquiry?
Read'st thou not something in my face that speaks
Wonderful change, and horror from within me?

CASTALIO.

Then there is something yet which I've not known;
What dost thou mean by horror and forbearance
Of more enquiry? Tell me, I beg thee, tell me:
And don't betray me to a second madness,

MONIMIA.

Must I?

CASTALIO.

If labouring in the pangs of death,
Thou wouldst do any thing to give me ease;
Unfold this riddle ere my thoughts grow wild,
And let in fears of ugly form upon me.

MONIMIA.

My heart won't let me speak it; but remember,
Monimia, poor *Monimia*, tells you this,
We ne'er must meet again——

CASTALIO.

What means my destiny?
For all my good or evil fate dwells in thee:

Ne'er meet again !

MONIMIA.

No, never.

CASTALIO.

Where's the pow'r
On earth, that dares look like thee, and say so?
Thou art my heart's inheritance, I serv'd
A long and painful, faithful slavery for thee :
And who shall rob me of the dear-bought blessing?

MONIMIA.

Time will clear all, but now let this content you:
Heav'n has decreed, and therefor I've resolv'd,
(With torment I must tell it thee, *Castalio*)
Ever to be a stranger to thy love ;
In some far distant country waste my life,
And from this day to see thy face no more.

CASTALIO.

Where am I? sure I wander 'midst enchantment,
And never more shall find the way to rest :
But, oh *Monimia* ! art thou indeed resolv'd,
To punish me with everlasting absence ?
Why turn'st thou from me? I'm alone already ;
Methinks I stand upon a naked beach,
Sighing to winds, and to the seas complaining,
Whilst afar off the vessel sails away,
Where all the treasure of my soul's embark'd ;
Wilt thou not turn—Oh could those eyes but speak,
I should know all, for love is pregnant in 'em ;
They swell, they press their beams upon me still :

Wilt thou not speak? if we must part for ever,
Give me but one kind word to think upon,
And please myself withal, whilst my heart's breaking.

MONIMIA.

Ah poor *Castalio*!

[*Exit Monimia.*]

CASTALIO.

Pity, by the Gods,
She pities me; then thou wilt go eternally?
What means all this? Why all this stir to plague
A single wretch? If but your word can shake
This world to atoms, why so much ado
With me? think me but dead, and lay me so.

Enter POLYDORE.

POLYDORE.

To live, and live a torment to myself,
What dog would bear't, that knew but his condition?
We've little knowlege, and that makes us cowards,
Because it cannot tell us what's to come.

CASTALIO.

Who's there?

POLYDORE.

Why, what art thou?

CASTALIO.

My brother *Polydore*?

POLYDORE.

My name is *Polydore*.

CASTALIO.

Can'st thou inform me——

POLYDORE.

Of what?

CASTALIO.

Of my *Monimia*?

POLYDORE.

No. Good-day.

CASTALIO.

In haste?

Methinks my *Polydore* appears in sadness.

POLYDORE.

Indeed, and so to me does my *Castalio*.

CASTALIO.

Do I?

POLYDORE.

Thou dost.

CASTALIO.

Alas, I've wond'rous reason;
I'm strangely alter'd, brother, since I saw thee.

POLYDORE.

Why?

CASTALIO.

Oh! to tell thee, would but put thy heart
To pain; let me embrace thee but a little,
And weep upon thy neck; I would repose
Within thy friendly bosom all my follies,
For thou wilt pardon 'em, because they're mine.

POLYDORE.

Be not too credulous, consider first,
Friends may be false. Is there no friendship false?

CASTALIO.

Why dost thou ask me that? does this appear
Like a false friendship, when with open arms
And streaming eyes, I run upon thy breast?
Oh 'tis in thee alone I must have comfort.

POLYDORE.

I fear *Castalio*, I have none to give thee.

CASTALIO.

Dost thou not love me then?

POLYDORE.

Oh, more than life:

I never had a thought of my *Castalio*
Might wrong the friendship we had vow'd together.
Hast thou dealt so by me?

CASTALIO.

I hope I have.

POLYDORE.

Then tell me why this mourning, this disorder?

CASTALIO.

Oh, *Polydore*, I know not how to tell thee;
Shame rises in my face, and interrupts
The story of my tongue.

POLYDORE.

I grieve, my friend
Knows any thing which he's ashamed to tell me;
Or didst thou e'er conceal thy thoughts from *Polydore*?

CASTALIO.

Oh, much too oft; but let me here conjure thee,
By all the kind affection of a brother,

Q

(For I'm ashamed to call myself thy friend)
Forgive me.

POLYDORE.

Well, go on

CASTALIO.

Our destiny contriv'd
To plague us both with one unhappy love!
Thou, like a friend, a constant generous friend,
In its first pangs did trust me with thy passion,
Whilst I still smooth'd my pain with smiles before thee,
And made a contract I ne'er meant to keep.

POLYDORE.

How!

CASTALIO.

Still new ways I study'd to abuse thee,
And keep thee as a stranger to my passion,
'Till yesterday I wedded with *Monimia*.

POLYDORE.

Ah, my *Castalio*, was that well done?

CASTALIO.

No, to conceal it from thee, was a fault.

POLYDORE.

A fault! when thou hast heard the tale I'll tell,
What wilt thou call it then?

CASTALIO.

How my heart throbs!

POLYDORE.

First, for thy friendship, traitor,
I cancel't thus; after this day I'll ne'er

Hold trust, or converse with the false *Castalio*?

This, witness heav'n.

CASTALIO.

What will my fate do with me!

I've lost all happiness, and know not why :

What means this, Brother?

POLYDORE.

Perjur'd, treacherous wretch,

Farewel.

CASTALIO.

I'll be thy slave, and thou shalt use me

Just as thou wilt, do but forgive me.

POLYDORE.

Never.

CASTALIO.

Oh! think a little what my heart is doing;

How from our infancy we hand in hand

Have trod the path of life, in love together;

One bed has held us, and the same desires,

The same aversions still employ'd our thoughts:

Whene'er had I a friend, that was not *Polydore's*?

Or *Polydore* a foe, that was not mine?

Ev'n in the womb we 'mbrac'd, and wilt thou now,

For the first fault, abandon and forsake me,

Leave me amidst afflictions to myself,

Plung'd in the gulph of grief, and none to help me?

POLYDORE.

Go to *Monimia*, in her arms thou'lt find

Repose; she has the art of healing sorrows.

CASTALIO.

What arts?

POLYDORE.

Blind wretch, thou husband! there's a question;
Go to her fulsome bed, and wallow there,
'Till some hot ruffian, full of lust and wine,
Come storm thee out, and shew thee what's thy bargain.

CASTALIO.

Hold there, I charge thee.

POLYDORE.

Is she not a——

CASTALIO.

Whore?

POLYDORE.

Ay whore; I think that word needs no explaining.

CASTALIO.

Alas, I can forgive ev'n this to thee;
But let me tell thee, *Polydore*, I'm griev'd
To find thee guilty of such low revenge,
To wrong that virtue which thou couldst not ruin.

POLYDORE.

It seems I lye then.

CASTALIO.

Should the bravest man
That e'ere wore conquering sword, but dare to whisper
What thou proclaim'st, he were the worst of liars;
My friend may be mistaken.

POLYDORE.

Damn the evasion;

Thou mean'st the worst, and he's a base-born villain
That said I ly'd.

CASTALIO.

Do, draw thy sword, and thrust it thro' my heart.
There is no joy in life, if thou art lost.
A base-born villain!

POLYDORE.

Yes, thou never cam'st
From old *Acasto's* loins; the midwife put
A cheat upon my mother, and instead
Of a true brother, in the cradle by me
Plac'd some coarse peasant's cub, and thou art he.

CASTALIO.

Thou art my brother still.

POLYDORE.

Thou ly'st.

CASTALIO.

Nay, then: [*He draws.*]

Yet I am calm.

POLYDORE.

A coward's always so.

CASTALIO.

Ah——ah——that stings home: coward!

POLYDORE.

Ay, base-born coward, villain.

CASTALIO.

This to thy heart then, tho' my mother bore thee.
[*Fight: Polydore drops his sword, and runs on Castalio's.*]

POLYDORE.

Now my *Castalio* is again my friend.

CASTALIO.

What have I done! my sword is in thy breast.

POLYDORE.

So I would have it be, thou best of men,
Thou kindest brother, and thou truest friend.

CASTALIO.

Ye Gods, we're taught that all your works are justice:
You're painted merciful, and friends to innocence:
If so, then why these plagues upon my head?

POLYDORE.

Blame not the Heavens; here lies thy fate, *Castalio*;
They're not the Gods, 'tis *Polydore* has wrong'd thee;
I've stain'd thy bed, thy spotless marriage-joys
Have been polluted by thy brother's lust.

CASTALIO.

By thee!

POLYDORE.

By me; last night the horrid deed
Was done; when all things slept but rage and incest.

CASTALIO.

Now, where's *Monimia*? Oh!*Enter* MONIMIA.

MONIMIA.

I'm here, who calls me?

Methought I heard a voice
Sweet as the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains,
When all his little flock's at feed before him.

But what means this? here's blood.

CASTALIO.

Ay, brother's blood?

Art thou prepar'd for everlasting pains?

POLYDORE.

Oh let me charge thee by th' eternal justice,
Hurt not her tender life!

CASTALIO.

Not kill her? Rack me,
Ye powers above, with all your choicest torments,
Horror of mind, and pains yet uninvented,
If I not practise cruelty upon her,
And treat revenge some way yet never known.

MONIMIA.

That task myself have finish'd. I shall die
Before we part; I've drank a healing draught
For all my cares, and never more shall wrong thee.

POLYDORE

Oh, she is innocent,

CASTALIO.

Tell me that story,
And thou wilt make a wretch of me indeed.

POLYDORE.

Hadst thou, *Castalio*, us'd me like a friend,
This ne'er had happen'd; hadst thou let me know
Thy marriage, we had all now met in joy:
But ignorant of that,
Hearing th' appointment made, enrag'd to think
Thou hadst out-done me in successful love,

I in the dark went and supply'd thy place;
Whilst all the night 'midst our triumphant joys,
The trembling, tender, kind, deceiv'd *Monimia*,
Embrac'd, carefs'd, and call'd me her *Castalio*.

CASTALIO.

And all this is the work of my own fortune:
None but myself cou'd e'er have been so curst.
My fatal love, alas! has ruin'd thee,
Thou fairest, goodly't frame the Gods e'er made,
Or ever human eyes, and hearts ador'd.
I've murder'd too my brother.
Why wouldst thou study ways to damn me farther,
And force the sin of parricide upon me?

POLYDOR.

'Twas my own fault, and thou art innocent;
Forgive the barbarous trespass of my tongue;
'Twas a hard violence; I could have dy'd
With love of thee, ev'n when I us'd thee worst;
Nay, at each word that my distraction utter'd,
My heart recoil'd, and 'twas half death to speak'em.

MONIMIA.

Now, my *Castalio*, the most dear of men,
Wilt thou receive pollution to thy bosom,
And close the eyes of one that has betray'd thee?

CASTALIO.

Oh! I'm the unhappy wretch, whose cursed fate
Has weigh'd thee down into destruction with him;
Why then thus kind to me?

MONIMIA.

en I'm laid low i' th' grave, and quite forgotten,
 thou be happy in a fairer bride;
 none can ever love thee like *Monimia*.

I am dead, as presently I shall be,
 the grim tyrant grasps my heart already)
 well of me: and if thou find ill tongues
 busy with my fame, don't hear me wrong'd;
 be a noble justice to the memory
 of our wretch once honour'd with thy love.
 My head swims! 'Tis very dark. Good-night. [*dies*.

CASTALIO.

survive thee! what a thought was that!
 O Heav'n I go prepar'd against that curse.

CHAMONT, *disarm'd, and seiz'd by ACASTO*
and Servants.

CHAMONT.

to hell, and swallow me to quick damnation,
 give your house, if I not live
 a lasting plague to thee, *Acasto*,
 all thy race. Y'have overpower'd me now;
 spare me, Heav'n!—Ah! here's the scene of death,
 here, my *Monimia*! breathless! now,
 wretches above, if ye have justice, strike,
 bolts thro' me, and thro' the curst *Castalio*.

ACASTO.

Polydore.

POLYDORE.

Who calls?

R

ACASTO.

How cam'st thou wounded!

CASTALIO.

Stand off thou hot-brain'd boisterous noisy ruffian,
And leave me to my sorrows.

CHAMONT.

By the love

I bore her living, I will ne'er forsake her,
But here remain 'till my heart burst with sobbing.

CASTALIO.

Vanish I charge thee, or—— [*Draws a dagger.*]

CHAMONT.

Thou canst not kill me,
That would be kindness, and against thy nature.

ACASTO.

What means *Castalio*? Sure thou wilt not pull
More sorrows on thy aged father's head.
Tell me, I beg you, tell me the sad cause
Of all this ruin.

POLYDOR.

That must be my task;
But 'tis too long for one in pain to tell;
You'll in my closet find the story written
Of all our woes. *Castalio's* innocent,
And so's *Monimia*, only I'm to blame:
Inquire no farther.

CASTALIO.

Thou unkind *Chamont*,
Unjustly hast pursu'd me with thy hate,

And fought the life of him that never wrong'd thee :
Now if thou wilt embrace a noble vengeance,
Come join with me and curse.

CHAMONT.

What?

CASTALIO.

First thyself,
As I do, and the hour that gave thee birth ;
Confusion and disorder seize the world,
To spoil all trust and converse amongst men :
'Twixt families engender endless feuds,
In countries needless fears, in cities factions,
In states rebellion, and in churches schism :
'Till all things move against the course of nature ;
'Till form's dissolv'd, the chain of causes broken,
And the originals of being lost.

ACASTO.

CASTALIO.

Have patience.

Patience ? preach it to the winds,
To roaring seas, or raging fires ; the knaves
That teach it laugh at ye, when ye believe 'em.
Strip me of all the common needs of life,
Scald me with leprosy, let friends forsake me,
I'll bear it all ; but curst to the degree
That I am now, 'tis this must give me patience :
Thus I find rest, and shall complain no more.

[*Stabs himself.*]

POLYDORÉ.

Castalio oh!

CASTALIO.

I come.

Chamont, to thee my birth-right I bequeath:
Comfort my mourning father, heal his griefs;[*Acasto faints into the arms of a Servant.*]

For I perceive they fall with weight upon him.

And for *Monimia's* sake, whom thou wilt findI never wrong'd, be kind to poor *Serina*.

Now all I beg, is, lay me in one grave

Thus with my love. Farewel, I now am—nothing.

[*Dies.*]

CHAMONT.

Take care of good *Acasto*, whilst I go

To search the means by which the fates hath plagu'd us.

'Tis thus that Heav'n its empire does maintain,

It may afflict, but man must not complain. [*Ex. omnes.*]

E P I L O G U E.

*Y*OU'VE seen one Orphan ruin'd here, and I
May be the next, if old Acasto die :
Should it prove so, I'd fain amongst you find,
Who 'tis would to the fatherless be kind.
To whose protection might I safely go ?
Is there amongst you no good-nature ? No.
What shall I do ? should I the godly seek,
And go a conventicling twice a week ?
Quite the lewd Stage, and its prophane pollution,
Affect each form and saint-like institution,
So draw the brethren all to contribution ?
Or shall I (as I guess the Poet may
Within these three days) fairly run away ?
No, to some city-lodgings Ill retire,
Seem very grave, and privacy desire :
Till I am thought some heiress rich in lands,
Fled to escape a cruel guardian's hands ;
Which may produce a story worth the telling
Of the next sparks that go a fortune-stealing.



VENICE PRESERV'D:

O R, A

PLOT DISCOVER'D.

A

T R A G E D Y.



To Her GRACE the

Dutcheſs of PORTSMOUTH.

MADAM,

WERE it poſſible for me to let the world know how intirely your Grace's goodneſs has devoted a poor man to your ſervice ; were there words enough in ſpeech to expreſs the mighty ſenſe I have of your great bounty towards me ; ſurely I ſhould write and talk of it for ever : but your Grace has given me ſo large a theme, and laid ſo vaſt a foundation, that imagination wants ſtock to build upon it. I am as one dumb when I would ſpeak of it ; and when I ſtrive to write, I want a ſcale of thought ſufficient to comprehend the height of it. Forgive me then, Madam, if (as a poor Peaſant once made a preſent of an apple to an emperor) I bring this ſmall tribute, the humble growth of my little garden, and lay it at your feet. Believe it is paid you with the utmoſt gratitude : believe that ſo long as I have thought to remember how very much I owe your generous nature, I will ever have a heart that ſhall be grateful for

D E D I C A T I O N.

it too: your Grace, next Heaven, deserves it amply from me; that gave me life, but on a hard condition, 'till your extended favour taught me to prize the gift, and took the heavy burden it was clogg'd with from me; I mean, hard fortune. When I had enemies, that with malicious power kept back and shaded me from those royal beams, whose warmth is all I have or hope to live by; your noble pity and compassion found me, where I was far cast backward from my blessing; down in the rear of fortune; called me up, placed me in the shine, and I have felt its comfort. You have in that restored me to my native right; for a steady faith, and loyalty to my prince, was all the inheritance my father left me: and however hardly my ill fortune deal with me, it is what I prize so well, that I never pawned it yet, and hope I never shall part with it. Nature and fortune were certainly in league when you were born: and as the first took care to give you beauty enough to enslave the hearts of all the world, so the other resolved to do its merit justice, that none but a monarch, fit to rule that world, should e'er possess it; and in it he had empire. The young prince you have given him, by his blooming virtues, early declares the mighty stock he came from; and as you have taken all the pious care of a dear mother and a prudent

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DEDICATION.

guardian, to give him a noble and generous education; may it succeed according to his merits and your wishes! may he grow up to be a bulwark to his illustrious father, and a patron to his loyal subjects! with wisdom and learning to assist him, whenever called to his councils; to defend his right against the encroachments of republicans in his senates; to cherish such men as shall be able to vindicate the royal cause; that good and fit servants to the crown may never be lost for want of a protector! May he have courage and conduct fit to fight his battles abroad, and terrify his rebels at home; and that all these may be yet more sure, during the spring-time of his years, when those growing virtues ought with care to be cherished in order to their ripening; may he never meet with vitious natures, or the tongues of faithless, sordid, insipid flatterers, to blast them! To conclude; may he be as great as the hand of fortune (with his honour) shall be able to make him: and may your Grace, who are so good a mistress, and so noble a patroness, never meet with a less grateful servant, than,

MADAM,

*Your GRACE's entirely
devoted creature,*

THO. OTWAY.


P R O L O G U E.

*IN these distracted times, when each man dreads
 The bloody stratagems of busy heads ;
 When we have fear'd three years we know not what,
 'Till witnesses begin to die o' th' rot,
 What made our Poet meddle with a plot ?
 Was't that he fancy'd for the very sake
 And name of plot, his trifling play might take ?
 For there's not in't one inch board evidence,
 But 'tis, he says, to reason plain and sense,
 And that he thinks a plausible defence.
 Were truth by sense and reason to be try'd ;
 Sure all our swearers might be laid aside.
 No, of such tools our author has no need,
 To make his plot, or make his play succeed :
 He, of black bills has no prodigious tales,
 Or Spanish pilgrims cast ashore in Wales ;
 Here's not one murder'd magistrate, at least,
 Kept rank like ven'son for a city feast,
 Grown four days stiff, the better to prepare
 And fit his pliant limbs to ride in chair.
 Yet here's an army rais'd though under ground,
 But no man seen, no one commission found :
 Here is a traitor too, that's very old,
 Turbulent, subtle, mischievous and bold,
 Bloody, revengeful, and to crown his port,
 Loves fumbling with a wench with all his heart ;
 Till after having many changes past,
 In spite of age, (thanks t' Heav'n) is hang'd at last.*

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P R O L O G U E

*Next is a senator that keeps a whore ;
In Venice none a higher office bore ;
To lewdness every night the Letcher ran :
Show me all London such another man ;
Match him at mother Crefwold's, if you can.*



*O Poland ! Poland ! had it been thy lot,
T'have heard in time of this Venetian plot ;
Thou surely chosen hadst one king from thence,
And honour'd them as thou hast England since.*

The P E R S O N S.

M E N.

Duke of <i>Venice</i> ,	Mr. Williams.
<i>Priuli</i> , father to <i>Belvidera</i> , a senator,	Mr. Bowman,
<i>Antonio</i> , a fine speaker in the senate,	Mr. Leigh.
<i>Bedamar</i> , the <i>Spanish</i> ambassador,	Mr. Gillow.
<i>Jaffeir</i> ,	Mr. Betterton.
<i>Pierre</i> ,	Mr. Smith.
<i>Renault</i> ,	Mr. Wiltshire.
<i>Spinosa</i> ,	Mr. Percival.
<i>Theodore</i> ,	} Confirators.
<i>Eliot</i> ,	
<i>Revillido</i> .	
<i>Durand</i> ,	
<i>Mazzana</i> ,	
<i>Bramveil</i> ,	
<i>Ternon</i> ,	
<i>Brabe</i> ,	

W O M E N.

<i>Belvidera</i> ,	Mrs. Barry.
<i>Aquilina</i> ,	Mrs. Curren.
Two women, attendants on <i>Belvidera</i> .	
Two women, servants to <i>Aquilina</i> .	
The Council of Ten.	
Officer, guard, friar, executioner and rabble.	

VENICE PRESERV'D:

O R, A

PLOT DISCOVER'D.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter PRIULI and JAFFEIR.

PRIULI.

NO more! I'll hear no more; be gone and leave

JAFFEIR. [me.

Not hear me! by my sufferings but you shall!

My lord, my lord! I'm not that abject wretch

You think me: patience! where's the distance throws

Me back so far, but I may boldly speak

In right, though proud oppression will not hear me?

PRIULI.

Have you not wrong'd me?

JAFFEIR.

Could my nature e'er

Have brook'd injustice, or the doing wrongs,

I need not now thus low have bent myself,

To gain a hearing from a cruel father!

Wrong'd you?

PRIULI.

Yes, wrong'd me in the nicest point,
 The honour of my house; you've done me wrong;
 You may remember, (for I now will speak,
 And urge its baseness,) when you first came home
 From travel, with such hopes, as made you look'd on
 By all mens eyes, a youth of expectation;
 Pleas'd with your growing virtue, I receiv'd you;
 Courted, and fought to raise you to your merits:
 My house, my table, nay, my fortune too,
 My very self, was yours; you might have us'd me
 To your best service; like an open friend,
 I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine;
 When in requital of my best endeavours,
 You treacherously practis'd to undoe me,
 Seduc'd the weakness of my age's darling,
 My only child, and stole her from my bosom:
 Oh *Belvidera*!

JAFFEIR.

'Tis to me you owe her,
 Childless you had been else, and in the grave
 Your name extinct, no more *Priuli* heard of.
 You may remember, scarce five years are past,
 Since in your brigantine you sail'd to see
 The *Adriatic* wedded by our duke.
 And I was with you: your unskilful pilot
 Dash'd us upon a rock; when to your boat
 You made for safety; enter'd first yourself:
 Th' affrighted *Belvidera* following next,

As she stood trembling on the vessel's side,
 Was by a wave wash'd off into the deep;
 When instantly I plung'd into the sea,
 And, buffeting the billows to her rescue,
 Redeem'd her life with half the loss of mine.
 Like a rich conquest in one hand I bore her,
 And with the other dash'd the saucy waves,
 That throng'd and press'd to rob me of my prize:
 I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms:
 Indeed you thank'd me; but a nobler gratitude
 Rose in her soul: for from that hour she lov'd me,
 'Till for her life she paid me with herself.

PRIULI.

You stole her from me; like a thief you stole her
 At dead of night; that cursed hour you chose
 To rife me of all my heart held dear.
 May all your joys in her prove false like mine;
 A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
 Attend you both; continual discord make
 Your days and nights bitter and grievous: still
 May the hard hand of a vexatious need
 Oppress, and grind you; 'till at last you find
 The curse of disobedience all your portion.

JAFFEIR.

Half of your curse, you have bestow'd in vain:
 Heav'n has already crown'd our faithful loves
 With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty:
 May he live to prove more gentle than his grandfire,
 And happier than his father!

T

PRIULI.

Rather live
To bate thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries: whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

JAFFEIR.

You talk as if 'twould please you.

PRIULI.

'Twould, by Heav'n.
Once she was dear indeed; the drops that fell
From my sad heart, when she forgot her duty,
The fountain of my life was not so precious:
But she is gone, and, if I am a man,
I will forget her.

JAFFEIR.

Would I were in my grave.

PRIULI.

And she too with thee;
For living here, you're but my curs'd remembrance:
I once was happy.

JAFFEIR.

You use me thus, because you know my soul
Is fond of *Belvidera*: you perceive
My life feeds on her, therefor thus you treat me.
Oh! could my soul have ever known satiety;
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me
But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my fortune where she would be kinder?

PRIULI.

You dare not do't.——

JAFFEIR.

Indeed, my lord, I dare not,
My heart, that awes me, is too much my master :
Three years are past since first our vows were plighted ;
During which time the world must bear me witness,
I've treated *Belvidera* like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of *Venice* ;
Distinction, place, attendance and observance,
Due to her birth, she always has commanded ;
Out of my little fortune I've done this ;
Because (tho' hopeless e'er to win your nature)
The world might see, I lov'd her for herself,
Not as the heirefs of the great *Priuli*,——

PRIULI.

No more !

JAFFEIR.

Yes ! all, and then adieu for ever.
There's not a wretch that lives on common charity
But's happier than me : for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty ; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never wak'd but to a joyful morning ;
Yet now must fall like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom 'scap'd, yet's wither'd in the ripening.

PRIULI.

Home, and be humble, study to retrench ;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,

T 2

148 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

Those pageants of thy folly :

Reduce the glittering trappings of thy wife

To humble weeds, fit for thy little state ;

Then to some suburb cottage both retire ;

Drudge to feed loathsome life ; get brats, and starve—

Home, home, I say— [Exit.

JAFFEIR.

Yes, if my heart would let me—

This proud, this swelling heart : home I would go,

But that my doors are hateful to mine eyes,

Fill'd and damm'd up with gaping creditors,

Watchful as fowlers when 'their game will spring ;

I've now not fifty ducats in the world,

Yet still I am in love, and pleas'd with ruin.

Oh, *Belvidera!* oh ! she is my wife—

And we will bear our wayward fate together,

But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE.

PIERRE.

My friend, good-morrow !

How fares the honest partner of my heart ?

What, melancholy ! not a word to spare me !

JAFFEIR.

I'm thinking, *Pierre*, how that damn'd starving
Call'd honesty, got footing in the world. [quality,

PIERRE.

Why, powerful villany first set it up,
For its own ease and safety : honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves

Repose and fatten : Were all mankind villains,
 They'd starve each other ; lawyers would want practice,
 Cut-throats rewards : each man would kill his brother,
 Himself, none would be paid or hang'd for murder :
 Honesty ! 'twas a cheat invented first
 To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
 That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
 And lord it uncontroll'd above their betters.

JAFFEIR.

Then honesty is but a notion ?

PIERRE.

Nothing else :

Like wit, much talk'd of, not to be defin'd :
 He that pretends to most too, has least share in't ;
 'Tis a ragg'd virtue : honesty ! no more on't.

JAFFEIR.

Sure thou art honest ?

PIERRE.

So indeed men think me.

But they're mistaken, *Jaffeir* : I am a rogue
 As well as they ;
 A fine gay bold-fac'd villain, as thou seest me.
 'Tis true, I pay my debts when they're contracted ;
 I steal from no man ; would not cut a throat
 To gain admission to a great man's purse,
 Or a whore's bed ; I'd not betray my friend
 To get his place or fortune : I scorn to flatter
 A blown-up fool above me, or crush the wretch beneath
 Yet, *Jaffeir*, for all this I am a villain. [me :

JAFFEIR.

A villain !

PIERRE.

Yes, a most notorious villain :

To see the sufferings of my fellow-creatures,
 And own myself a man : to see our senators
 Cheat the deluded people with a shew
 Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.
 They say, by them our hands are free from fetters;
 Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds;
 Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow;
 Drive us like wrecks down the rough tide of power,
 Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction.
 All that bear this are villains, and I one,
 Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,
 And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
 That make us slaves, and tell us 'tis our charter.

JAFFEIR.

Oh, *Aquilina* ! friend, to lose such beauty,
 The dearest purchase of thy noble labours ;
 She was thy right by conquest, as by love.

PIERRE.

Oh, *Jaffeir* ! I'd so fix'd my heart upon her,
 That wheresoe'er I fram'd a scheme of life
 For time to come, she was my only joy,
 With which I wish'd to sweeten future cares;
 I fancy'd pleasures, none, but one that loves
 And doats as I did, can imagine like 'em :
 When in th' extremity of all these hopes,

In the most charming hour of expectation,
 Then, when our eager wishes soar the highest,
 Ready to stoop and grasp the lovely game,
 A haggard owl, a worthless kite of prey,
 With his foul wings sail'd in, and spoil'd my quarry.

JAFFEIR.

I know the wretch, and scorn him as thou hat'st him.

PIERRE.

Curse on the common good that's so protected;
 Where every slave that heaps up wealth enough
 To do much wrong, becomes a lord of right:
 I, who believ'd no ill could e'er come near me,
 Found in th'embraces of my *Aquilina*
 A wretched old, but itching senator:
 A wealthy fool, that had bought out my title:
 A rogue, that uses beauty like a lamb-skin,
 Barely to keep him warm; that filthy cuckoo, too
 Was, in my absence, crept into my nest,
 And spoiling all my brood of noble pleasure.

JAFFEIR.

Didst thou not chace him thence?

PIERRE.

I did, and drove
 The rank old-bearded *Hirco* stinking home:
 The matter was complain'd of in the senate,
 I summon'd to appear, and censur'd basely,
 For violating something they call *privilege*—
 This was the recompence of my service.
 Would I'd been rather beaten by a coward:

A soldier's mistress, *Jaffeir*, is his religion;
 When that's prophan'd, all other ties are broken:
 That even dissolves all former bonds of service;
 And from that hour I think myself as free
 To be the foe as e'er the friend of *Venice*——
 Nay, dear revenge, whene'er thou call'st, I'm ready.

JAFFEIR.

I think no safety can be here for virtue;
 And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live
 In such a wretched state as this of *Venice*,
 Where all agree to spoil the public good,
 And villains fatten with the brave man's labours.

PIERRE.

We've neither safety, unity, nor peace,
 For the foundation's lost of common good;
 Justice is lame as well as blind amongst us;
 The laws (corrupted to their ends that make 'em)
 Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
 That every day starts up t'enslave us deeper:
 Now could this glorious cause but find out friends
 To do it right, oh *Jaffeir*! then might'st thou
 Not wear these seals of woe upon thy face:
 The proud *Priuli* should be taught humanity,
 And learn to value such a son as thou art.
 I dare not speak! but my heart bleeds this moment.

JAFFEIR.

Curst be the cause, tho' I thy friend be part only
 Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
 For I am us'd to misery, and perhaps

May find a way to sweeten't to thy spirit.

PIERRE.

Too soon 'twill reach thy knowlege——

JAFFEIR.

Then from thee

Let it proceed. There's virtue in thy friendship
Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin. ,

PIERRE.

Then thou art ruin'd!

JAFFEIR.

That I long since knew;
I and ill-fortune have been long acquainted.

PIERRE.

I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains;
The sons of public rapine were destroying:
They told me, by the sentence of the law,
They had commission to seize all thy fortune:
Nay more, *Priuli's* cruel hand hath sign'd it.
Here stood a ruffian with a horrid face
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale:
There was another making villanous jests
At thy undoing; he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient most domestic ornaments,
Rich hangings, inttrmix'd and wrought with gold;
The very bed, which on thy wedding-night
Receiv'd thee to the arms of *Belvidera*;

150 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

The scene of all thy joys, was violated
By the course hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.

JAFFEIR.

Now thank Heav'n ———

PIERRE.

. Thank Heav'n for what?

JAFFEIR.

That I'm not worth a ducat.

PIERRE.

Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate of *Venice*,
Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false;
Where there's no trust, no truth; where innocence
Stoops under vile oppression; and vice lords it:
Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how at last
Thy beauteous *Belvidera*, like a wretch
That's doom'd to banishment, came weeping forth,
Shining through tears, like *April*-suns in showers
That labour to o'ercome the cloud that loads 'em;
Whilst two young virgins, on whose arms she lean'd,
Kindly look'd up, and at her grief grew sad,
As if they catch'd the sorrows that fell from her:
E'en the lewd rabble that were gather'd round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her;
Govern'd their roaring throats, and grumbled pity:
I cou'd have hugg'd the greezy rogues: they pleas'd me.

JAFFEIR.

I thank thee for this story, from my soul,
Since now I know the worst that can befall me:

A PLOT DISCOVER'D. 131

Ah *Pierre*! I have a heart, that could have borne
The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me:
But when I think what *Belvidera* feels;
The bitterness her tender spirit tastes of,
I own myself a coward: bear my weakness,
If throwing thus my arms about thy neck,
I play the boy, and bubble in thy bosom.
Oh! I shall drown thee with my sorrows!

PIERRE.

Burn!

First burn, and level *Venice* to thy ruin.
What! starve like beggars brats in frosty weather
Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death!
Thou, or thy cause shall never want assistance,
Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee;
Command my heart: thou'rt every way its master.

JAFFEIR.

No, there's a secret pride in bravely dying.

PIERRE.

Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad;
Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow.
Revenge! the attribute of Gods; they stamp it
With their great image on our natures: die!
Consider well the cause that calls upon thee:
And if thou'rt base enough, die then: remember
Thy *Belvidera* suffers: *Belvidera*!
Die—damn first—what! be decently interr'd
In a church-yard, and mingle thy brave dust
With stinking rogues that rot in winding-sheets,

152 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
Surfeit slain fools, the common dung o' th' soil.

JAFFEIR.

Oh!

PIERRE.

Well said, out with it, swear a little—

JAFFEIR

Swear! By sea and air, by earth, by heav'n and hell,
I will revenge my *Belvidera's* tears!

Hark thee, my friend—*Priuli*—is—a sentator,

PIERRE.

A dog.

JAFFEIR.

Agreed.

PIERRE

Shoot him.

JAFFEIR.

With all my heart.

No more: where shall we meet at night?

PIERRE.

I'll tell thee;

On the *Rialto* every night at twelve

I take my evening's walk of meditation;

There we two'll meet, and talk of precious mischief—

JAFFEIR.

Farewel.

PIERRE.

At twelve.

JAFFEIR.

At any hour; my plague!

Will keep me walking. Tell me why, good heav'n, [E. P.
 Thou mad'st me what I am, with all the spirit,
 Aspiring thoughts and elegant desires,
 That fill the happiest man? Ah! rather why
 Didst thou not form me fordid as my fate,
 Base-minded, dull and fit to carry burdens?
 Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me?
 Is this just dealing, nature? — *Belvidera* :

Enter BELVIDERA.

Poor *Belvidera*!

BELVIDERA.

Lead me, lead me, my virgins,
 To that kind voice. My lord, my love, my refuge!
 Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face:
 My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
 At sight of thee, and bound with sprightly joys.
 Oh smile, as when our loves were in their spring,
 And cheer my fainting soul.

JAFFEIR.

As when our loves
 Were in their spring! has then our fortune chang'd?
 Art thou not *Belvidera*, still the same,
 Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee?
 If thou art alter'd, where shall I have harbour?
 Where ease my loaded heart? Oh! where complain?

BELVIDERA.

Does this appear like change, or love decaying,
 When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,
 With all the resolution of strong truth?

154 V. ENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
Beats not my heart as 'twould alarm thine,
To a new charge of bliss? I joy more in thee,
Than did thy mother when she hugg'd thee first,
And bless'd the gods for all her travail past.

JAFFEIR.

Can there in woman be such glorious faith?
Sure all ill stories of thy sex are false.
Oh woman! lovely woman! Nature made thee
To temper man; we had been brutes without you:
Angels are painted fair, to look like you:
There's in you all that we believe of Heav'n,
Amazing brightness, purity and truth,
Eternal joy, and everlasting love.

BELVIDERA.

If love be treasure, we'll be wond'rous rich;
I have so much, my heart will surely break with't;
Vows can't express it. When I would declare
How great's my joy, I'm dumb with the big thought;
I swell and sigh, and labour with my longing.
O lead me to some desert wide and wild,
Barren as our misfortunes! where my soul
May have its vent; where I may tell aloud
To the high heavens and ev'ry list'ning planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught;
Where I may throw my eager arms about thee,
Give loose to love with kisses, kindly joy,
And let off all the fire that's in my heart.

JAFFEIR.

Oh *Belvidera*! doubly I'm a beggar,

Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee;
 Want! worldly want! that hungry meager friend
 Is at my heels, and chafes me in view.
 Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these limbs,
 Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
 Endure the bitter grips of smarting poverty,
 When banish'd by our miseries abroad,
 (As suddenly we shall be) to seek out,
 In some far climate where our names are strangers,
 For charitable succour; wilt thou then,
 When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
 And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads;
 Wilt thou then talk thus to me? wilt thou then
 Rush my cares thus, and shelter me with love?

BELVIDERA.

Oh I will love thee, even in madness love thee.
 Tho' my distracted senses should forsake me,
 'd find some intervals, when my poor heart
 Should 'swage itself, and be let loose to thine.
 Tho' the bare earth be all our resting place,
 Its roots our food, some cleft our habitation,
 'll make this arm a pillow for thy head;
 As thou fighting ly'st, and swell'd with sorrow,
 Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
 Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest;
 Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morning.

JAFFEIR.

[her!

Hear this, you Heavens, and wonder how you made
 Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world,

Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
 Tranquillity and happiness like mine;
 Like gaudy ships th' obsequious billows fall
 And rise again, to lift you in your pride;
 They wait but for a storm, and then devour you:
 I, in my private bark, already wreck'd,
 Like a poor merchant driv'n on unknown land,
 That had by chance pack'd up his choicest treasure
 In one dear casket, and sav'd only that,
 Since I must wander farther on the shore,
 Thus hug my little, but my precious, store;
 Resolv'd to scorn, and trust my fate no more. [*Ex.*]

A C T II. S C E N E I.

Enter PIERRE and AQUILINA.

AQUILINA.

BY all the wrongs, thou'rt dearer to my arms
 Than all the wealth of *Venice*: pr'ythee stay,
 And let us love to-night.

PIERRE.

No: there is a fool,
 There's fool about thee: when a woman sells
 Her flesh to fools, her beauty's lost to me;
 They leave a tainted sully where they've past;
 There's such a baneful quality about 'em,
 E'en spoils complexions with their nauseousness;

Thèy infect all they touch ; I cannot think
Of tasting any thing a fool has pall'd.

AQUILINA.

I loath and scorn that fool thou mean'st, as much
Or more than thou canst ; but the beast has gold
That makes him necessary : power too,
To qualify my character, and poise me
Equal with peevish virtue, that beholds
My liberty with envy : in their hearts
They're loose as I am ; but an ugly power
Sits in their faces, and frights pleasure from 'em.

PIERRE.

Much good may't do you, madam, with your senator.

AQUILINA.

My senator ! why, canst thou think that wretch
E'er fill'd thy *Aquilina's* arms with pleasure ?
Think'st thou, because I sometimes gave him leave
To foil himself at what he is unfit for ;
Because I force myself t' endure and suffer him,
Think'st thou, I love him ? No, by all the joys,
Thou ever gav'st me, his presence is my penance ;
The worst thing an old man can be's a lover,
A mere *memento mori* to poor woman.
I never lay by his decrepid side,
But all that night I ponder'd on my grave.

PIERRE.

Would he were well sent thither.

AQUILINA.

That's my wish too :

158 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
For then, my *Pierre*, I might have cause with pleasure
To play the hypocrite; oh! how I could weep
Over the dying dotard, kiss him too,
In hopes to smother him quite; then when the time
Was come to pay my sorrows at his funeral,
(For he has already made me heir to treasures
Wou'd make me out-act a real widow's whining:)
How could I frame my face to fit my mourning!
With wringing hands attend him to his grave,
Fall swooning on his hearse: take mad possession
E'en of the dismal vault where he lay bury'd,
There like th' *Ephefian* matron dwell, till thou,
My lovely soldier, com'st to my deliverance;
Then throwing up my veil, with open arms
And laughing eyes, run to new dawning joy.

PIERRE.

No more! I've friends to meet me here to-night,
And must be private. As you prize my friendship,
Keep up your coxcomb: let him not pry nor listen,
Nor frisk about the house as I have seen him,
Like a tame mumping squirrel with a bell on;
Curs will be abroad to bite him, if you do.

AQUILINA.

What friends to meet? may'nt I be of your council?

PIERRE.

How! A woman ask questions out of bed?
Go to your senator, ask him what passes
Amongst his brethren; he'll hide nothing from you:
But pump me not for politics. No more!

A PLOT DISCOVER'D. 159

Give order, that whoever in my name
Comes here, receive admittance. So, good-night.

AQUILINA.

Must we ne'er meet again! Embrace no more!
Is love so soon and utterly forgotten!

PIERRE.

As you henceforth treat your fool, I'll think on't.

AQUILINA.

Curst be all fools—I die if he forsakes me;
And how to keep him, heav'n or hell instruct me. [*Exe.*

SCENE the RIALTO.

Enter JAFFEIR.

JAFFEIR.

I'm here; and thus, the shades of night around me,
I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay surely 'tis so with me;
For every tread I step, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids me not be quiet.
I've heard how desperate wretches like myself,
Have wander'd out at this dead time of night
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk:
Sure I'm so curst, that tho' of heav'n forsaken,
No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell! hell! why sleep'st thou?

Enter PIERRE.

PIERRE.

Sure I've staid too long:
The clock has struck, and I may lose my profelyte.
Speak, who goes there?

JAFFEIR.

A dog that comes to howl
At yonder moon: what's he that asks the question?

PIERRE.

A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures,
And ne'er betray their masters; never fawn
On any that they love not: well met, friend:
Jaffeir!

JAFFEIR.

The same. Oh *Pierre*, thou'rt come in season,
I was just going to pray.

PIERRE.

Ah! that's mechanic,
Priests make a trade on't, and yet starve by't too:
No praying; it spoils business, and time's precious:
Where's *Belvidera*?

JAFFEIR.

For a day or two
I've lodg'd her privately, till I see farther
What fortune will do with me. Pr'ythee, friend,
If thou wouldst have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of *Belvidera*?

PIERRE.

Not of her.

JAFFEIR.

Oh no!

PIERRE.

Nor name her? May be I wish her well.

JAFFEIR.

Whom well!

PIERRE.

Thy wife, thy lovely *Belvidera*;
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done!

JAFFEIR.

You're merry, *Pierre*!

PIERRE.

I am so:

Thou shalt smile too, and *Belvidera* smile;
We'll all rejoice, here's something to buy pins.
Marriage is chargeable. [*Gives him a purse.*]

JAFFEIR.

I but half wish'd
To see the devil, and he's here already. Well!
What must this buy, rebellion, murder, treason?
Tell me which way I must be damn'd for this.

PIERRE.

When last we parted, we'd no qualms like these,
But entertain'd each others thoughts like men,
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reform'd since our last meeting? What new miracles

162 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
Have happen'd? has *Priuli's* heart relented?
Can he be honest?

JAFFEIR.

Kind Heav'n! let heavy curses
Gall his old age; cramps, aches rack his bones,
And bitterest disquiet wring his heart;
Oh let him live till life become his burden!
Let him groan under't long, linger an age
In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its ease, but late.

PIERRE.

Nay, couldst thou not
As well, my friend, have stretch'd the curse to all
The senate round, as to one single villain?

JAFFEIR.

But curses stick not: could I kill with cursing,
By Heav'n, I know not thirty heads in *Venice*
Should not be blasted; senators should rot
Like dogs on dunghills; but their wives and daughters
Die of their own diseases. Oh for a curse
To kill with!

PIERRE.

Daggers, daggers, are much better—

JAFFEIR.

Ha!

PIERRE.

Daggers.

JAFFEIR,

But where are they?

PIERRE.

Oh, a thousand
May be dispos'd in honest hands in *Venice*.

JAFFEIR.

Thou talk'st in clouds.

PIERRE.

But yet a heart half wrong'd,
As thine has been, would find the meaning, *Jaffeir*.

JAFFEIR.

A thousand daggers all in honest hands;
And have not I a friend will stick one here?

PIERRE.

Yes, if I thought thou wert not to be cherish'd
T'a nobler purpose, I would be that friend.
But thou hast better friends; friends whom thy wrongs
Have made thy friends; friends worthy to be call'd so!
I'll trust thee with a secret; there are spirits
This hour at work. But as thou art a man,
Whom I have pickt and chosen from the world,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter,
And when I've told thee that which only Gods,
And men like Gods, are privy to, then swear
No chance or change shall wrest it from thy bosom.

JAFFEIR.

When thou wouldst bind me, is there need of oaths?
(Green-sickness girls lose maidenheads with such
counters)

For thou'rt so near my heart, that thou may'st see
Its bottom, sound its strength and firmness to thee:

164 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

Is coward, fool, or villain in my face?
If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou wouldst not use me in a little cause
For I am fit for honour's roughest task;
Nor ever yet found fooling was my province;
And for a villanous inglorious enterprize,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.

PIERRE.

Nay, it's a cause thou wilt be fond of, *Jaffier*,
For it is founded on the noblest basis,
Our liberties, our natural inheritance;
There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't;
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't;
Openly act a deed the world shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.

JAFFEIR.

For liberty!

PIERRE.

For liberty, my friend!
Thou shalt be freed from base *Priuli's* tyranny,
And thy sequestred fortunes heal'd again.
I shall be freed from those opprobrious wrongs
That press me now, and bend my spirit downward
All *Venice* free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right: fools shall be pull'd
From wisdom's seat; those baleful unclean birds,
Those lazy owls who perch'd near fortune's top
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings

To cuff down new-fledg'd virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.

JAFFEIR.

What can I do?

PIERRE.

Canst thou not kill a senator?

JAFFEIR.

Were there one wise or honest, I would kill him
For herding with that nest of fools and knaves.
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had, and the brave story warms me.

PIERRE.

Swear then!

JAFFEIR.

I do, by all those glittering stars
And yon great ruling planet of the night!
By all good powers above, and ill below!
By love and friendship, dearer than my life!
No power or death shall make me false to thee.

PIERRE.

Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
A council's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great empire's hatching: there I'll lead thee!
But be a man, for thou'rt to mix with men
Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when it's wildest—

JAFFEIR.

I give thee thanks
For this kind warning: yes, I'll be a man,

166 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
And charge thee, *Pierre*, whene'er thou see'st my fears
Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my breast, and shew it for a coward's.
Come let's be gone, for from this hour I chace
All little thoughts, all tender human follies
Out of my bosom: vengeance shall have room:
Revenge!

PIERRE.

And liberty!

JAFFEIR.

Revenge! revenge— [*Exeunt.*]

*The SCENE changes to AQUILINA's house,
the Greek Courtezan.*

Enter RENAULT.

RENAULT.

Why was my choice, ambition, the worst ground
A wretch can build on? it's indeed, at distance,
A goodly prospect, tempting to the view;
The height delights us, and the mountain-top
Looks beautiful, because it's nigh to heav'n;
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us.
Who's there?

Enter SPINOSA.

SPINOSA.

Renault, Good-morrow! for by this time
I think the scale of night has turn'd the balance,
And weighs up morning: has the clock struck twelve?

RENAULT.

Yes; clocks will go as they are set: but man,
Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain:
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
In waiting dull attendance; 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mixt, like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolv'd.

SPINOSA.

Hell seize that soul amongst us, it can frighten.

RENAULT.

What's then the cause that I am here alone?
Why are we not together?

Enter ELIOT.

O Sir, welcome!

You are an *Englishman*: when treason's hatching,
One might have thought you'd not have been behind
In what whore's lap, have you been lolling? [hand:
Give but an *Englishman* his whore, and ease,
Beef and a sea-coal-fire, he's your's for ever.

ELIOT.

Frenchman, you are saucy.

RENAULT.

How!

Enter BEDAMAR the Ambassador, THEODORE, BRAMVEIL, DURAND, BRABE, REVILLIDO, MEZZANA, TERNON, RETROSI, Conspirators.

BEDAMAR.

At difference ! fy :

Is this a time for quarrels ? thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl : should men of your high calling,
Men separated by the choice of providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this assembly, as in one great jewel,
T'adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smil'd on ;
Should you, like boys, wrangle for trifles ?

RENAULT.

Boys !

BEDAMAR.

Renault, thy hand !

RENAULT.

I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here ;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my forward age its weakness.

BEDAMAR.

*Eliot, thou once hadst virtue ; I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bend with god-like goodness,
Not half thus courted : 'Tis thy nation's glory,
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.
Once more embrace, my friends,—we'll all embrace—
United thus, we are the mighty engine*

Must twist this rooted empire from its basis!

Totters not it already?

ELIOT.

Would 'twere tumbling.

BEDAMAR.

Nay it shall down: this night we seal its ruin.

Enter P I E R R E.

Oh! *Pierre*, thou art welcome!

Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st

Lovely dreadful, and the fate of *Venice*

Seems on thy sword already. Oh my *Murs*!

The poets that first feign'd a God of war

Sure prophecy'd of thee.

P I E R R E.

Friends! was not *Brutus*,

(I mean that *Brutus*, who in open senate

Stabb'd the first *Cæsar* that usurp'd the world)

A gallant man?

RENAULT.

Yes, and *Catiline* too;

Tho' story wrong his fame: for he conspir'd

To prop the reeling glory of his country:

His cause was good.

BEDAMAR.

And ours as much above it,

As *Renault*, thou'rt superior to *Cethegus*,

Or *Pierre* to *Cassius*,

P I E R R E.

Then to what we aim at,

When do we start? or must we talk for ever?

BEDAMAR.

No, *Pierre*, the deed's near birth: fate seems to have set
The business up, and given it to our care:
I hope there's not a heart or hand amongst us
But is firm and ready.

ALL.

All!

We'll die with *Bedamar*.

BEDAMAR.

Oh men,
Matchless, as will your glory be hereafter;
The game is for a matchless prize, if won;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

RENAULT.

What can lose it!

The public stock's a beggar; one *Venetian*
Trusts not another: look into their stores
Of general safety; empty magazines,
A tatter'd fleet, a murmuring unpaid army,
Bankrupt nobility, a harass'd commonalty,
A factious, giddy, and divided senate,
Is all the strength of *Venice*: let's destroy it;
Let's fill their magazines with arms to awe them,
Man out their fleet, and make their trade maintain it;
Let loose the murmuring army on their masters,
To pay themselves with plunder, lop their nobles
To the base roots, whence most of 'em first sprung;

A PLOT DISCOVER'D. 171

Enslave the rout, whom smarting will make humble;
Turn out their droning senate, and possess
That seat of empire which our souls are fram'd for.

PIERRE.

Ten thousand men are armed, at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world;
This wretched state has starv'd them in its service.
And, by your bounty quicken'd, they're resolv'd
To serve your glory, and revenge their own:
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for th' alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.

BEDAMAR.

I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied diligence
Has still kept walking, and it shall have ease;
After this night it is resolv'd we meet
No more, till *Venice* own us for her lords.

PIERRE.

How lovelily the *Adriatic* whore,
Dress'd in her flames, will shine! devouring flames!
Such as shall burn her to the wat'ry bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.

BEDAMAR.

Now if any

Amongst us, that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or interest he'd wish to save,
Let it be told; the general doom is seal'd;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.

PIERRE.

I must confess, you there have touch'd my weakness.
 I have a friend; hear it, and such a friend!
 My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell you.
 He knows the very business of this hour;
 But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it;
 We've chang'd a vow, to live and die together,
 And he's at hand to ratify it here.

RENAULT.

How! all betray'd?

PIERRE.

No—I've dealt nobly with you:
 I've brought my all into the public stock;
 I'ad but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you:
 Receive and cherish him: or if, when seen
 And search'd, you find him worthless; as my tongue
 Has lodg'd this secret in his faithful breast,
 To ease your fears I wear a dagger here,
 Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.
 Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of.

Enter JAFFEIR with a dagger.

BEDAMAR.

His presence bears the shew of manly virtue!

JAFFEIR.

I know you'll wonder all, that, thus uncall'd,
 I dare approach this place of fatal councils;
 But I'm amongst you, and by heav'n it glads me,
 To see so many virtues thus united,
 To restore justice, and dethrone oppression.

Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,
 Into this breast; but if you think it worthy
 To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
 Send me into the curs'd assembled senate;
 It shrinks not, tho' I meet a father there.
 Would you behold this city flaming? Here's
 A hand shall bear a lighted torch at noon
 To th' Arsenal, and set its gates on fire.

RENAULT.

You talk this well, Sir.

JAFFEIR.

Nay—by heav'n I'll do this.

Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces,
 You fear me a villain; and indeed tis odd
 To hear a stranger talk thus at first meeting,
 Of matters that have been so well debated.
 But I come ripe with wrongs, as you with councils;
 I hate this senate, am a foe to *Venice*:
 A friend to none, but men resolv'd like me,
 To push on mischief. Oh did you but know me,
 I need not talk thus!

BEDAMAR.

Pierre! I must embrace him.

My heart beats to this man as if it knew him.

RENAULT.

I never lov'd these huggers.

JAFFEIR.

Still I see,

The cause delights me not. Your friends survey me

174 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

As I were dangerous—but I come arm'd
Against all doubts, and to your trust will give
A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay for,
My Belvidera! Ho! My Belvidera!

BEDAMAR.

What wonders next?

JAFFEIR.

Let me intreat you, Sirs,
As I have henceforth hopes to call ye friends,
That all but the ambassador, and this
Grave guide of councils, with my friend that owns me,
Withdraw a while, to spare a woman's blushes.

[*Excunt all but Bed. Ren. Jaff. Pier.*

BEDAMAR.

Whither will all this ceremony lead us?

JAFFEIR

My Belvidera! Ho! my Belvidera!

Enter BELVIDERA.

BELVIDERA.

Who calls so loud at this late peaceful hour?
That voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love:
Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou?

JAFFEIR.

Indeed 'tis late.

BELVIDERA.

Oh! I have slept and dreamt,
And dreamt again: where hast thou been, thou loiterer?
Tho' my eyes clos'd, my arms have still been open'd!

Stretch'd every day betwixt my broken slumbers,
To search if thou wert come to crown my rest;
There's no repose without thee: oh the day
Too soon will break, and wake us to our sorrow;
Come, come to bed, and bid thy cares good-night.

JAFFEIR.

Oh *Belvidera*! we must change the scene
In which the past delights of life were tasted:
The poor sleep little; we must learn to watch
Our labours late and early every morning.
Midst winter frosts, thin clad and fed with sparing,
Rise to our toils, and drudge away the day.

BELVIDERA.

Alas! where am I! whither is't you lead me!
Methinks I read distraction in your face!
Something less gentle than the fate you tell me:
You shake and tremble too! your blood runs cold!
Heav'n's guard my love, and bless his heart with patience!

JAFFEIR.

That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,
Who has ordain'd it so, that thou and I,
(Thou the divinest good man e'er possess'd,
And I, the wretched'st of the race of man)
This very hour, without one tear, must part.

BELVIDERA.

Part! must we part? Oh am I then forsaken?
Will my love cast me off? have my misfortunes
Offended him so highly, that he'll leave me?
Why drag you from me? whither are you going?

176 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

My dear! my life! my love!

JAFFEIR.

Oh friends!

BELVIDERA.

Speak to me.

JAFFEIR.

Take her from my heart,
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge thee take her, but with tender'st care,
Relieve her troubles and assuage her sorrows.

RENAULT.

Rise, madam! and command amongst your servants.

JAFFEIR.

To you, Sirs, and your honours, I bequeath her,
And with her this; whene'er I prove unworthy—

[*Gives a dagger.*]

You know the rest,—Then strike it to her heart;
And tell her, he who three whole happy years
Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still increasing love,
Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.

BELVIDERA.

Nay, take my life, since he has sold it cheaply;
Or send me to some distant clime your slave;
But let it be far off, lest my complainings
Should reach his guilty ears, and shake his peace.

JAFFEIR.

No, *Belvidera*, I've contriv'd thy honour;
Trust to my faith, and be but fortune kind

me, as I'll preserve that faith unbroken.
 When next we meet, I'll lift thee to a height,
 I'll gather all the gazing world about thee,
 wonder what strange virtue plac'd thee there.
 if we ne'er meet more——

BELVIDERA.

Oh thou unkind one!
 I shall meet more! have I deserv'd this from you?
 Look on me, tell me; speak, thou dear deceiver,
 why am I separated from thy love?
 I am false, accuse me; but if true,
 't, prythee don't in poverty forsake me,
 pity the sad heart, that's torn with parting.
 hear me! yet recal me— [*Exe. Ren. Bed. and Belv.*]

JAFFEIR.

Oh my eyes!
 I cannot that way, but turn yourselves a while
 to my heart, and be wean'd altogether.
 friend, where art thou?

PIERRE.

Here, my honour's brother.

JAFFEIR.

Belvidera gone?

PIERRE

Renault has led her
 to her own apartment; but, by heav'n!
 we must not see her more 'till our work's over.

JAFFEIR.

o?

PIERRE.

Not for your life.

JAFFEIR.

Oh *Pierre!* wert thou but she,

How I could pull thee down into my heart,
 Gaze on thee till my eye-strings crackt with love,
 Till all my sinews with its fire extended,
 Fixt me upon the rack of ardent longing;
 Then swelling, sighing, raging, to be blest,
 Come like a panting turtle to thy breast,
 On thy soft bosom, hovering, bill and play,
 Confess the cause why last I fled away;
 Own 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er,
 And never follow false ambition more. [*Exeunt.*

A C T III. S C E N E I.

Enter AQUILINA and her Maid.

AQUILINA.

TELL him I am gone to bed: tell him I am
 not at home; tell him I've better company
 with me, or any thing; tell him in short I will not
 see him, the eternal troublesome vexatious fool: he
 worse company than an ignorant physician——I
 not be disturb'd at these unseasonable hours.

MAID.

But, madam! he's here already, just enter'd the

AQUILINA.

Turn him out again, you unnecessary, uselefs, giddy-brain'd afs! if he will not be gone, fet the houfe a-fire and burn us both: I'd rather meet a toad in my difh, than that old hideous animal in my chamber to-night.

Enter ANTONIO.

ANTONIO.

Nacky, Nacky, Nacky,—how doft do, *Nacky*? hurry, durry. I am come, little *Nacky*; paft eleven o'clock, a late hour; time in all confcience to go to bed, *Nacky*—*Nacky* did I fay? Ay, *Nacky, Aquilina, lina, lina, lina, quilina, quilina, quilina, Aquilina, Naquilina, Naquilina, Acky, Acky, Nacky, Nacky, queen Nacky*—come let's to bed—you fubbs, you pug you—you little pufs—purree, tuzzy—I am a fenator.

AQUILINA.

You are a fool, I am fure.

ANTONIO.

May be fo too, sweet-heart. Never the worfe fenator for all that. Come, *Nacky, Nacky*, let's have a game at romp, *Nacky*.

AQUILINA.

You would do well, fignior, to be troublefome here no longer, but leave me to myfelf; be fober and go home. Sir.

ANTONIO.

Home, *Madona*!

AQUILINA.

Ay, home, Sir. Who am I?

ANTONIO.

Madona, as I take it, you are my—you are—
thou art my little *Nicky, Nacky*——that's all!

AQUILINA.

I find you are resolv'd to be troublesome; and so to make short of the matter in few words, I hate you, detest you, loathe you, I am weary of you, sick of you——hang you. you are an old, silly, impertinent, impotent, sollicitous coxcomb; crazy in your head, and lazy in your body, love to be meddling with every thing, and if you had not money, you are good for nothing.

ANTONIO.

Good for nothing! Hurry durry, I'll try that presently. Sixty-one years old, and good for nothing; that's brave. [*To the Maid.*] Come, come, come, Mrs. Fiddle-faddle, turn you out for a season; go, turn out I say, it is our will and pleasure to be private some moments——out, out when you are bid too —[*Puts her out and locks the door.*] Good for nothing, you say?

AQUILINA.

Why, what are you good for?

ANTONIO.

In the first place, madam, I am old, and consequently very wise, very wise, *Madona*, d'ye mark that? in the second place, take notice, if you please,

am a senator, and when I think fit can make speeches, *Madona*. Hurry durry, I can make a speech in the senate-house now and then—would make your hair stand an end, *Madona*.

AQUILINA.

What care I for your speeches in the senate house? if you would be but silent here, I should thank you.

ANTONIO.

Why, I can make speeches to thee too, my lovely *Madona*; for example—My cruel fair one, [*Takes out a purse of gold, and at every pause shakes it.* Since it is my fate, that you should with your servant angry prove; tho' late at night—I hope 'tis not too late with this to gain reception for my love—There's for thee, my little *Nicky Nacky*—take it, here take it—I say take it, or I'll throw it at your head—how now, rebel!

AQUILINA.

Truly, my illustrious senator, I must confess your honour is at present most profoundly eloquent indeed.

ANTONIO.

Very well: come now let's sit down and think upon't a little—come; sit, I say—sit down by me a little, my *Nicky Nacky*, ha—[*Sits down.*] Hurry durry—good for nothing——

AQUILINA.

No, Sir, if you please I can know my distance and stand.

ANTONIO.

Stand: how? *Nacky* up and I down! Nay then let

A a

182 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

me exclaim with the poet,

Shew me a cause more pitiful, who can,

A standing woman, and a falling man

Hurry durry——not sit down——see this, ye gods.

You won't sit down?

AQUILINA.

No, Sir.

ANTONIO.

Then look you now, suppose me a bull, a *Basan*-bull, the bull of bulls, or any bull. Thus up I get, and with my brows thus bent—I broo, I say I broo, I broo, I broo. You won't sit down, will you—I broo,——

[Bellows like a bull, and drives her about.

AQUILINA.

Well, Sir, I must endure this. *[She sits down.*
Now your honour has been a bull, pray what beast will your worship please to be next?

ANTONIO.

Now, I'll be a senator again, and thy lover, little *Nicky Nacky!* *[he sits by her]* Ah! toad, toad, toad, toad! spit in my face a little, *Nacky*——spit in my face, pr'ythee, spit in my face never so little: spit but a little bit——spit, spit, spit, spit when you are bid I say; do, pr'ythee spit——now, now, now spit: what you won't spit, will you? Then I'll be a dog.

AQUILINA.

A dog, my lord!

ANTONIO.

Ay, a dog—and I'll give thee this t'other purse to let me be a dog—and use me like a dog a little. Hurry durry—I will—here 'tis—— [*Gives the purse.*]

AQUILINA.

Well, with all my heart. But let me beseech your dogship to play your tricks over as fast as you can, that you may come to stinking the sooner, and be turn'd out of doors as you deserve.

ANTONIO.

Ay, ay,——no matter for that —— that shan't move me—— [*He gets under the table*] Now bough, waugh waugh, bough waugh—— [*Barks like a dog.*]

AQUILINA.

Hold, hold, hold, Sir, I beseech you: what is't you do? If curs bite, they must be kickt, Sir. Do you see, kickt thus.

ANTONIO.

Ay, with all my heart: do, kick, kick on, now I am under the table, kick again—kick harder—harder yet, bough waugh, waugh, waugh, bough——odd I'll have a snap at thy shins—bough waugh waugh, waugh bough——odd she kicks bravely——

AQUILINA.

Nay, then I'll go another way to work with you: and I think here's an instrument fit for the purpose!

[*Fetches a whip and a bell.*]

What, bite your mistress, Sirrah! out, out of doors, you dog, to kennel and be hang'd—bite your mistress

by the legs, you rogue—— [*She whips him.*

ANTONIO.

Nay, pr'ythee *Nacky*, now thou art too loving: hurry durry, odd I'll be a dog no longer.

AQUILINA.

Nay, none of your fawning and grinning; but be gone, or here's the discipline: what, bite your mistress by the legs, you mungril? out of doors——hout, hout, to kennel, firrah! go.

ANTONIO.

This is very barbarous usage, *Nacky*, very barbarous: look you, I will not go—I will not stir from the door, that I resolve——hurry durry, what, shut me out? [*She whips him out.*

AQUILINA.

Ay, and if you come here any more to-night I'll have my footman lug you, you cur: what, bite your poor mistress *Nacky*, firrah!

Enter MAID.

MAID.

Heav'ns, madam! what's the matter?

[*He howls at the door like a dog.*

AQUILINA.

Call my footmen hither presently.

Enter two FOOTMEN.

MAID.

They are here already, madam; the house is all alarm'd with a strange noise, that no body knows what to make of.

AQUILINA.

Go all of you, and turn that troublesome beast in the next room out of my house—if I ever see him within these walls again, without my leave for his admittance, you sneaking rogues—I'll have you poison'd all, poison'd like rats: every corner of the house shall stink of one of you: go, and learn hereafter to know my pleasure. So now for my *Pierre*:

Thus when the godlike lover is displeas'd,
We sacrifice our fool, and he's pleas'd. [*Exe.*]

S C E N E II.

Enter BELVIDERA.

BELVIDERA.

I'm sacrific'd! I'm sold! Betray'd to shame!
Inevitable ruin has inclos'd me!
No sooner was I to my bed repair'd,
To weigh and (weeping) ponder my condition,
But the old hoary wretch, to whose false care
My peace and honour was entrusted, came
(Like *Tarquin*) ghastly with infernal lust.
Oh thou *Roman Lucrece*! thou couldst find friends to
vindicate thy wrong;
I never had but one, and he's prov'd false;
He that should guard my virtue, has betray'd it;
Left me, undone me! Oh that I could hate him!
Where shall I go! Oh whither, whither wander?

Enter JAFFEIR.

JAFFEIR.

Can *Belvidera* want a resting place,
 When these poor arms are open to receive her?
 Oh 'tis in vain to struggle with desires
 Strong as my love to thee; for every moment
 I'm from thy sight, thy heart within my bosom
 Moans like a tender infant in its cradle,
 Whose nurse had left it: come, and with the songs
 Of gentle love persuade it to its peace.

BELVIDERA.

I fear the stubborn wanderer will not own me;
 'Tis grown a rebel to be ruled no longer,
 Scorns the indulgent bosom that first lull'd it;
 And, like a disobedient child, disdains
 The soft authority of *Belvidera*.

JAFFEIR,

There was a time——

BELVIDERA.

Yes, yes, there was a time
 When *Belvidera's* tears, her cries, and sorrows,
 Were not despis'd; when if she chanc'd to sigh,
 Or look but sad;—there was indeed a time
 When *Jaffeir* would have ta'en her in his arms,
 Eas'd her declining head upon his breast,
 And never left her till he found the cause.
 But let her now weep seas,
 Cry till she rend the earth; sigh till she burst
 Her heart asunder; still he bears it all,

Deaf as the wind, and as the rocks unshaken,

JAFFEIR.

Have I been deaf? am I that rock unmov'd,
Against whose root, tears beat, and sighs are sent?
In vain have I beheld thy sorrows calmly?
Witness against me, Heav'ns! have I done this?
Then bear me in a whirlwind back again,
And let that angry dear one ne'er forgive me!
Oh thou too rashly censur'st of my love!
Could'st thou but think how I have spent this night,
Dark and alone, no pillow to my head,
Rest in my eyes, nor quiet in my heart,
Thou wouldst not, *Belvidera*, sure thou wouldst not,
Talk to me thus, but, like a pitying angel,
Spreading thy wings, come settle on my breast,
And hatch warm comfort there, ere sorrows freeze.

BELVIDERA.

Why then, poor mourner, in what baleful corner
Hast thou been talking with that witch the night?
On what cold stone hast thou been stretch'd along,
Gathering the grumbling winds about thy head,
To mix with theirs the accents of thy woes!
Oh! now I find the cause my love forsakes me:
I am no longer fit to bear a share
In his concerns: my weak female virtue
Must not be trusted; 'tis too frail and tender.

JAFFEIR.

Oh *Porcia*! *Porcia*! What a foul was thine?

BELVIDERA.

That *Porcia* was a woman; and when *Brutus*,
 Big with the fate of *Rome*, (Heav'n guard thy safety!)
 Conceal'd from her the labours of his mind,
 She let him see her blood was great as his,
 Flow'd from a spring as noble, and a heart
 Fit to partake his troubles, as his love:
 Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower
 Thou gav'st last night in parting with me; strike it
 Here to my heart, and as the blood flows from it,
 Judge if it run not pure as *Cato's* daughter's.

JAFFEIR.

Thou art too good, and I indeed unworthy,
 Unworthy so much virtue: teach me how
 I may deserve such matchless love as thine,
 And see with what attention I'll obey thee.

BELVIDERA.

Do not despise me: that's the all I ask.

JAFFEIR.

Despise thee! Hear me——

BELVIDERA.

Oh thy charming tongue
 Is but too well acquainted with my weakness;
 Knows, let it name but love, my melting heart
 Dissolves within my breast; till with clos'd eyes
 I reel into thy arms, and all's forgotten.

JAFFEIR.

What shall I do?

BELVIDERA.

Tell me! be just, and tell me,
 Why dwells that busy cloud upon thy face?
 Why am I made a stranger? why that sigh,
 And I not know the cause? Why when the world
 Is wrapt in rest, why chuses then my love
 To wander up and down in horrid darkness,
 Loathing his bed, and these desiring arms?
 Why are these eyes bloodshot with tedious watching?
 Why starts he now? and looks as if he wish'd
 His fate were finish'd? Tell me, ease my fear;
 I left, when we next time meet, I want the power
 To search into the sickness of thy mind,
 But talk as wildly then as thou lookest now..

JAFFEIR.

Oh, *Belvidera*!

BELVIDERA.

Why was I last night deliver'd to a villain?

JAFFEIR.

Ha! a villain?

BELVIDERA.

Yes! to a villain! Why at such an hour
 Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches,
 That look as hell has drawn 'em into league?
 Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
 Was I delivered with such dreadful ceremonies?
 "To you, Sirs, and your honour I bequeath her,
 "And with her this: whene'er I prove unworthy,
 "You know the rest, then strike it to her heart?"

B b

190 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
Oh! why's that *rest* conceal'd from me? must I
Be made the hostage of a hellish trust?
For such I know I am; that's all my value!
But by the love and loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves;
Strait to the senate, tell 'em all I know,
All that I think, all that my fears inform me.

JAFFEIR.

Is this the *Roman* virtue! this the blood
That boasts its purity with *Cato's* daughter!
Would she have e'er betray'd her *Brutus*?

BELVIDERA.

No,
For *Brutus* trusted her: wert thou so kind,
What would not *Belvidera* suffer for thee?

JAFFEIR.

I shall undo myself, and tell thee all.

BELVIDERA.

Look not upon me as I am a woman,
But as a bone, thy wife, thy friend; who long
Has had admission to thy heart, and there
Study'd the virtues of thy gallant nature;
Thy constancy, thy courage and thy truth,
Have been my daily lesson: I have learn'd 'em
And bold as thou, can suffer or despise
The worst of fates for thee; and with thee share 'em.

JAFFEIR.

Oh! thou divinest Power! look down and hear
My prayers! instruct me to reward this virtue!

Yet think a little, ere thou tempt me further;
Think I've a tale to tell will ~~shake~~ thy nature,
Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of
Into vile tears and despicable sorrows:
Then if thou should'st betray me!

BELVIDERA.

Shall I swear

JAFFEIR.

No, do not swear: I would not violate
Thy tender nature with so rude a bond:
But as thou hopes to see me live my days,
And love thee long, lock this within thy breast;
I've bound myself by all the strictest sacraments,
Divine and human——

BELVIDERA.

Speak!

JAFFEIR.

To kill thy father——

BELVIDERA.

My father!

JAFFEIR.

Nay the throats of the whole senate
Shall bleed, my *Belvidera*: he amongst us
That spares his father, brother, or his friend,
Is damn'd. How rich and beauteous will the face
Of ruin look, when these wide streets run blood!
I, and the glorious partners of my fortune,
Shouting, and striding o'er the prostrate dead,
Still to new waste! whilst thou, far off in safety,

192 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
Smiling, shalt see the wonders of our daring;
And when night comes, with praise and love receive me!

BELVIDERA.

Oh!

JAFFEIR.

Have a care, and shrink not even in thought!
For if thou do'st——

BELVIDERA.

I know it, thou wilt kill me.
Do, strike thy sword into this bosom: lay me
Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.
Murder my father! Tho' his cruel nature
Has persecuted me to my undoing;
Driven me to basest wants; can I behold him,
With smiles of vengeance, butcher'd in his age?
The sacred fountain of my life destroy'd?
And can'st thou shed the blood that gave me being?
Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country?
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
Mix with hir'd slaves, bravoës, and common stabbers,
Nose-flitters, ally-lurking villains! Join
With such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,
To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

JAFFEIR.

Thou wrong'st me, *Belvidera*! I've engag'd
With men of souls: fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongst them,
But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashions.

BELVIDERA.

What's he, to whose curst hands last night thou gav'st
that well done? Oh! I could tell a story [me?
I'd rouse thy lion-heart out of its den,
make it rage with terrifying fury.

JAFFEIR.

Speak on, I charge thee!

BELVIDERA.

Oh my love! if ere
Belvidera's peace deserve thy care,
Drive me from this place: last night, last night!

JAFFEIR.

Strait me not, but give me all the truth.

BELVIDERA.

Sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
in the power of that old son of mischief;
Sooner was I laid on my sad bed,
That vile wretch approach'd me; loose unbutton'd,
By for violation: then my heart
Shob'd with its fears: oh how I wept and sigh'd,
Shrunk and trembled! wish'd in vain for him
That should protect me. Thou, alas! wert gone.

JAFFEIR.

Patience, sweet heav'n! 'till I make vengeance sure.

BELVIDERA.

He drew the hideous dagger forth thou gav'st him,
With upbraiding smiles he said, "Behold it,
This is the pledge of a false husband's love:"
In my arms then prest, and would have clasp'd me;

194 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

But with my cries I scar'd his coward heart,
Till he withdrew, and mutter'd vows to hell.
These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy honour,
Thy love, all stak'd, and all will go to ruin.

JAFFEIR.

No more: I charge thee keep this secret close;
Clear up thy sorrows, look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more; retire,
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour;
I'll heal its failings, and deserve thy love.

BELVIDERA.

Oh should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In anger leave me, and return no more.

JAFFEIR.

Return no more! I would not live without thee
Another night to purchase the creation.

BELVIDERA.

When shall we meet again?

JAFFEIR.

Anon at twelve!

I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms,
Come like a travell'd dove, and bring thee peace.

BELVIDERA.

Indeed!

JAFFEIR.

By all our loves!

BELVIDERA.

'Tis hard to part.

But sure no falshood ever look'd so fairly.

Farewel, remember twelve.

[Exit.

JAFFEIR.

Let Heav'n forget me

When I remember not thy truth, thy love.

How curst is my condition, tofs'd and justled

From every corner; fortune's common fool,

The jest of rogues, an instrumental afs

For villains to lay loads of shame upon,

And drive about just for their ease and scorn.

Enter PIERRE.

PIERRE.

Jaffeir!

JAFFEIR.

Who calls!

PIERRE.

A friend that could have wish'd

T'have found thee otherwise employ'd: what, hunt

A wife on the dull soil! sure a staunch husband,

Of all hounds is the dullest? Wilt thou never,

Never be wean'd from caudles and confections?

What feminine tale hast thou been list'ning to,

Of unair'd shirts, catarrhs, and tooth-ach, got

By thin-sol'd shoes? Damnation! that a fellow,

Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction

Of a whole people, should sneak thus in corners,

To ease his fulsome lusts, and fool his mind.

JAFFEIR.

May not a man then trifle out an hour

196 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
With a kind woman, and not wrong his calling?

PIERRE.

No: in a cause like ours.

JAFFEIR.

Then friend, our cause
Is in a damn'd condition: for I'll tell thee,
That canker-worm call'd *Letchery* has touch'd it;
'Tis tainted vilely: would'st thou think it, *Renault*,
(That mortify'd old wither'd winter-rogue)
Loves simple fornication like a priest.
I found him out for watering at my wife:
He visited her last night, like a kind guardian:
Faith she has some temptations, that's the truth on't.

PIERRE.

He durst not wrong his trust!

JAFFEIR.

'Twas something late tho'
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.

PIERRE.

Was she in bed?

JAFFEIR.

Yes, faith, in virgin sheets
White as her bosom, *Pierre*, dish'd neatly up,
Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.
Oh! how the old fox stunk I warrant thee,
When the rank fit was on him.

PIERRE.

Patience guide me!

He us'd no violence?

JAFFEIR.

No, no! out on't, violence!
 Play'd with her neck; brush'd her with his grey beard,
 Struggled and towz'd, tickl'd her till she squeak'd a little,
 May be; or so—but not a jot of violence—

PIERRE.

Damn him.

JAFFEIR.

Ay, so say I: but hush, no more on't;
 All hitherto is well, and I believe
 Myself no monster yet: tho' no man knows
 What fate he's born to: sure 'tis near the hour
 We all shall meet for our concluding orders:
 Will the ambassador be here in person?

PIERRE.

No: he has sent commission to that villain
Renault, to give the executing charge;
 I'd have thee be a man, if possible,
 And keep thy temper; for a brave revenge
 Ne'er comes too late.

JAFFEIR.

Fear not, I'm cool as patience:
 Had he completed my dishonour, rather
 Than hazard the success our hopes are ripe for,
 I'd bear it all with mortifying virtue.

PIERRE

He's yonder coming this way through the hall;
 His thoughts seem full.

JAFFEIR.

Pr'ythee, retire and leave me
With him alone ; I'll put him to some trial,
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.

PIERRE.

Be careful then.

[Exit.

JAFFEIR.

Nay, never doubt, but trust me.
What, be a devil ! take a damning oath
For shedding native blood ! can there be a sin
In merciful repentance ? Oh this villain !

Enter RENAULT.

RENAULT.

Perverse ! and peevish ! what a slave is man !
To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him !
Dispatch the tool her husband——that were well.
Who's there ?

JAFFEIR.

A man.

RENAULT.

My friend, my dear ally !
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge,
Is very well.

JAFFEIR.

Sir, are you sure of that ?
Stands she in perfect health ? Beats her pulse even
Neither too hot nor cold ?

RENAULT.

What means that ques

JAFFEIR.

n have fantastic constitutions!
s their wishes, always wavering,
xt; was it not boldly done
fight to trust the thing I lov'd
treasure too!) with youth so fierce
s as thine? but thou art honest.

RENAULT.

s accuse me?

JAFFEIR.

Curst be he that doubts
I have try'd it, and declare,
use a guardian of my honour,
by keeping: for I know thee.

RENAULT.

JAFFEIR.

thee: there's no fallshood in thee,
just as thou art: let us embrace.
thou cut my throat, or I cut thine

RENAULT.

not do't.

JAFFEIR.

You lye, Sir.

RENAULT.

How!

JAFFEIR.

No n
world, and must reform, that's

200 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

Enter SPINOSA, THEODORE, ELIOT,
REVELLIDO, DURAND, BRAMVEIL, and
the rest of the Conspirators.

RENAULT.

Spinosa! Theodore!

SPINOSA.

The same,

RENAULT.

You are welcome!

SPINOSA.

You are trembling, Sir.

RENAULT.

'Tis a cold night indeed, and I am aged,
Full of decay and natural infirmities; [*Pierre re-enters.*
We shall be warm, my friend, I hope to-morrow.

PIERRE.

'Twas not well done; thou shouldst have stroak'd
And not have gall'd him. [*him,*

JAFFEIR.

Damn him, let him chew on't.
Heav'n! where am I? beset with curst fiends,
That wait to damn me: what a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature—hush, my heart.

RENAULT.

My friends, 'tis late: are we assembled all?
Where's *Theodore*?

THEODORE.

At hand.

RENAULT.

Spinosa.

SPINOSA.

Here.

RENAULT.

Bramveil.

BRAMVEIL.

I'm ready.

RENAULT.

Durand and Brabe.

DURAND.

Command us ;

We are both prepar'd !

RENAULT.

Mezzana, Revellide,

Ternon, Retrofs; oh ! you're men I find,

Fit to behold your fate, and meet her summons ;

To-morrow's rising sun must see you all

Deck'd in your honours ! are the soldiers ready ?

A L L.

All, all.

RENAULT.

You *Durand*, with your thousand, must possess
St. *Mark's* ; you, captain, know your charge already ;

'Tis to secure the ducal palace : you,

Brabe, with a hundred more must gain the *Secque*.

With the like number, *Bramveil*, to the *Procurale*.

Be all this done with the least tumult possible,

'Till in each place you post sufficient guards :

Then sheath your swords in every breast you meet.

JAFFEIR.

Oh reverend cruelty! Damn'd bloody villain!

RENAULT.

During this execution, *Durand*, you
Must in the midst keep your battalia fast;
And, *Theodore*, be sure to plant the cannon
That may command the streets; whilst *Revellido*,
Mezzano, *Ternon*, and *Retrofi*, guard you.
This done, we'll give the general alarm,
Apply petards, and force the Ars'nal gates;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon (if it dare resist)
Batter't to ruin. But above all, I charge you
Shed blood enough, spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition; if there live a senator
After to-morrow, tho' the dullest rogue
That ere said nothing, we have lost our ends;
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of senator, and bury it in blood.

JAFFEIR

Merciless, horrid slave!—Ay, blood enough!
Shed blood enough, old *Renault*: how thou charm'st me!

RENAULT.

But one thing more, and then, farewell till fate
Join us again, or separate us ever:
First let's embrace. Heav'n knows who next shall thus
Wing ye together: but let's all remember
We wear no common cause upon our swords:

Let each man think that on his single virtue
 Depends the good and fame of all the rest;
 Eternal honour or perpetual infamy.
 Let us remember thro' what dreadful hazards
 Propitious fortune hitherto has led us,
 How often on the brink of some discovery
 Have we stood tottering, yet still kept our ground
 So well, that the busiest searchers ne'er could follow
 Those subtle tracts which puzzled all suspicion.
 You droop, Sir,

JAFFEIR.

No: with most profound attention
 I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.

RENAULT.

Tho' there be yet few hours 'twixt them and ruin,
 Are not the senate lull'd in full security,
 Quiet and satisfy'd, as fools are always?
 Never did so profound repose fore-run
 Calamity so great: nay our good fortune
 Has blinded the most piercing of mankind,
 Strengthen'd the fearfulest, charm'd the most suspicious,
 Confounded the most subtle: for we live,
 We live, my friends, and quickly shall our life
 Prove fatal to these tyrants: let's consider
 That we destroy oppression, avarice,
 A people nurs'd up equally with vices
 And loathsome lusts, which nature most abhors,
 And such as without shame she cannot suffer.

JAFFIER.

Oh *Belvidera*, take me to thy arms,
And shew me where's my peace, for I have lost it. [Ex.]

RENAULT.

Without the least remorse then let's resolve
With fire and sword t'exterminate these tyrants;
And when we shall behold those curst tribunals,
Stain'd by the tears and sufferings of the innocent,
Burning with flames, rather from Heav'n than ours,
The raging, furious, and un pitying soldier
Pulling his reeking dagger from the bosoms
Of gasping wretches; death in every quarter,
With all, that sad disorder can produce,
To make a spectacle of horror; then,
Then let us call to mind, my dearest friends,
That there is nothing pure upon the earth;
That the most valu'd things have most alloys,
And that in change of all those vile enormities,
Under whose weight this wretched country labours,
The means are only in our hands to crown them.

PIERRE.

And may those powers above, that are propitious
To gallant minds, record this cause, and bless it.

RENAULT.

Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
Should there, my friends, be found amongst us one
False to this glorious enterprize, what fate,
What vengeance were enough for such a villain?

ELIOT.

Death here; without repentance, hell hereafter.

RENAULT.

Let that be my lot, if, as here I stand,
Lifted by fate amongst her darling sons,
Tho' I had one only brother, dear by all
The strictest ties of nature; tho' one hour
Had given us birth, one fortune fed our wants,
One only love, and that but of each other,
Still fill'd our minds: could I have such a friend
Join'd in this cause, and had but ground to fear
He meant foul play; may this right hand drop from me,
If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
And stab him to the heart before you: who?
Who would do less? Wouldst thou not, *Pierre*, the same?

PIERRE.

You've singled me, Sir, out for this hard question,
As if'twere started only for my sake!
Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my bosom,
Search it with all your swords! am I a traitor?

RENAULT.

No: but I fear your late commended friend
Is little less: come, Sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this *Jaffier*?

SPINOSA.

He left the room just now in strange disorder.

RENAULT.

Nay, there is danger in him: I observ'd him
During the time I took for explanation,

D d

206 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

He was transported from most deep attention
To a confusion which he could not smother.
His looks grew full of sadness and surprize,
All which betray'd a wav'ring spirit in him,
That labour'd with reluctancy and sorrow.
What's requisite for safety, must be done
With speedy execution, he remains
Yet in our power: I for my own part wear
A dagger——

PIERRE.

Well.

RENAULT.

And I could wish it——

PIERRE.

Where?

RENAULT.

Bury'd in his heart,

PIERRE.

Away! we're yet all friends;
No more of this, 'twill breed ill blood amongst us

SPINOSA.

Let us all draw our swords, and search the how
Pull him from the dark hole where he sits broodin
O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of h

PIERRE.

Who talks of killing? who's he'll shed the blood
That's dear to me! Is't you? or you? or you, Sir
What! not one speak! How you stand gaping at
On your grave oracle, your wooden god there!

Yet not a word? Then Sir, I'll tell y'a secret;
Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue! [To Ren.

RENAULT.

A coward—— [Handles his sword.

PIERRE.

Put up thy sword, old man,
Thy hand shakes at it; come, let's heal this breach,
I am too hot: we yet may all live friends.

SPINOSA.

'Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.

PIERRE.

Again! Who's that?

SPINOSA.

'Twas I.

THEODORE.

And I.

REVILLIDO.

And I.

ELIOT.

And all.

RENAULT.

Who are on my side?

SPINOSA.

Every honest sword.

Let's die like men, and not be sold like slaves.

PIERRE.

One such word more, by Heav'n, I'll to the senate,
'And hang ye all like dogs, in clusters.

Why peep your coward swords half out their shells?

208 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

Why do you not all brandish them like mine?
You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing.

RENAULT.

Go to the senate and betray us; haste,
Secure thy wretched life; we fear to die
Less than thou dar'st be honest.

PIERRE.

That's rank falsehood;
Fear'st not thou death? Fy, there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.
Had *Jaffier's* wife prov'd kind, he'd still been true.
Faugh—how that stinks?
Thou die! thou kill my friend, or thou, or thou,
Or thou, with that lean, wither'd, wretched face!
Away, disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow where your honour calls you;
I'll bring that man, whose blood you so much thirst for,
And you shall see him venture for you fairly—
Hence, hence, I say. [*Exit Renault angrily.*]

SPINOSA.

I fear we've been to blame; and done too much.

THEODORE.

'Twas too far urg'd against the man you lov'd.

REVILLIDO.

Here take our swords, and crush them with your feet

SPINOSA.

Forgive us, gallant friend.

PIERRE.

Nay, now you've found

The way to melt, and cast me as you will :
 I'll fetch this friend, and give him to your mercy.
 Nay he shall die, if you will take him from me.
 For your repose, I'll quit my heart's best jewel;
 But would not have him torn away by villains,
 And spiteful villany.

SPINOSA.

No; may ye both
 For ever live, and fill the world with fame!

PIERRE.

Now ye're too kind. Whence rose all this discord?
 Oh what a dang'rous precipice have we 'scap'd!
 How near a fall was all we'd long been building!
 What an eternal blot had stain'd our glories!
 If one, the bravest and the best of men
 Had fall'n a sacrifice to rash suspicion!
 Butcher'd by those, whose cause he came to cherish:
 Oh could you know him all as I have known him,
 How good he is, how just, how true, how brave,
 You would not leave this place 'till you had seen him;
 Humbled yourself before him, kiss'd his feet,
 And gain'd remission for the worst of follies.

Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end,
 And to your loves me better recommend,
 That I've preserv'd your fame, and sav'd my friend. }

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

Enter JAFFEIR and BELVIDERA.

JAFFEIR.

WHERE dost thou lead me? Every step I move,
 Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
 Of a rack'd friend: oh my dear charming ruin!
 Where are we wand'ring?

BELVIDERA.

To eternal honour;
 To do a deed shall chronicle thy name,
 Among the glorious legends of those few,
 That have sav'd sinking nations: thy renown
 Shall be the future song of all the virgins,
 Who by thy piety have been preserv'd
 From horrid violation: every street
 Shall be adorn'd with statues to thy honour,
 And at thy feet this great inscription written,
Remember him that propt the fall of Venice.

JAFFEIR.

Rather, remember him, who after all
 The sacred bonds of oaths and holier friendship,
 In fond compassion to a woman's tears
 Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth, and honour,
 To sacrifice the bosom that reliev'd him,
 Why wilt thou damn me?

BELVIDERA.

Oh inconstant man!

How will you promise? how will you deceive?
 Do, return back, re place me in my bondage,
 Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lov'st me,
 And let thy dagger do its bloody office.
 Oh that kind dagger, *Jaffeir*, how 'twill look,
 Struck thro' my heart; drench'd in my blood to th' hilt,
 Whilst these poor dying eyes shall with their tears
 No more torment thee; then thou wilt be free;
 Or if thou think'st it nobler; let me live
 'Till I'm a victim to the hateful lust
 Of that infernal devil, that old fiend
 That's damn'd himself, and would undo mankind.
 Last night, my love!

JAFFEIR.

Name, name it not again,

It shews a beastly image to my fancy,
 Will wake me into madness: Oh, the villain!
 That durst approach such purity as thine,
 On terms so vile: destruction, swift destruction
 Fall on thy coward head, and make thy name
 The common scorn of fools, if I forgive him;
 If I forgive him! if I not revenge
 With utmost rage, and most unstaying fury,
 Thy suffering, thou dear darling of my life.

BELVIDERA.

Delay no longer then, but to the senate;
 And tell the dismal'st story ever utter'd:

212 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
Tell 'em what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepar'd; how near's the fatal hour!
Save thy poor country, save the reverend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed: save the poor tender lives
Of all those little infants, which the swords
Of murderers are whetting for this moment;
Think thou already hear'st their dying screams,
Think that thou see'st their sad distracted mothers
Kneeling before thy feet, and begging pity,
With torn dishevel'd hair, and streaming eyes,
Their naked mangled breasts besmear'd with blood,
And even the milk with which their fondled babes
Softly they hush'd, dropping in anguish from 'em.
Think thou see'st this, and then consult thy heart.

JAFFEIR.

Oh!

BELVIDERA.

Think too, if you lose this present minute,
What miseries the next day brings upon thee.
Imagine all the horrors of that night,
Murder and rapine, waste and desolation,
Confus'dly raging. Think what then may prove
My lot! the ravisher may then come safe,
And 'midst the terror of the public ruin .
Do a damn'd deed; perhaps may lay a train
To catch thy life; then where will be revenge,
The dear revenge that's due to such a wrong?

JAFFEIR.

[thee.]

By all Heav'n's Powers, prophetic truth dwells in
 For every word thou speak'it strikes thro' my heart,
 Like a new light, and shews it how't has wander'd.
 Just what thou'ast made me, take me, *Belvidera*,
 And lead me to the place where I'm to say
 This bitter lesson; where I must betray
 My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends;
 Must I betray my friend? Ah take me quickly,
 Secure me well before that thought's renew'd:
 If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.

BELVIDERA.

Hast thou a friend more dear than *Belvidera*?

JAFFEIR.

No; thou'rt my soul itself, wealth, friendship, honour;
 All present joys, and earnest of all future,
 Are summ'd in thee: methinks when in thy arms
 Thus leaning on thy breast, one minute's more
 Than a long thousand years of vulgar hours.
 Why was such happiness not given me pure?
 Why dash'd with cruel wrongs, and bitter warnings?
 Come lead me forward now like a tame lamb
 To sacrifice. Thus in his fatal garlands
 Deck'd fine and pleas'd, the wanton skips and plays,
 Trots by th' enticing flattering priestess's side,
 And much transported with its little pride,
 Forgets his dear companions of the plain;
 'Till by her bound, he's on the altar lain, [pain.]
 Yet then too hardly bleats, such pleasure's in the }

214 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

Enter OFFICER and six Guards.

OFFICER.

Stand, who goes there?

BELVIDERA.

Friends.

JAFFEIR.

Friends, *Belvidera!* hide me from my friends.
By Heav'n, I'd rather see the face of hell,
Than meet the man I love.

OFFICER.

But what friends are you?

BELVIDERA.

Friends to the senate and the state of *Venice*.

OFFICER.

My orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring them to the council,
Who now are sitting.

JAFFEIR.

Sir, you shall be obey'd.
Hold, brutes, stand off, none of your paws upon me.
Now the lot's cast, and fate do what you wilt.

[Exeunt guarded.]

S C E N E II. *The Senate-house.*

*Where appear sitting, the Duke of VENICE,
PRIULI, ANTONIO, and eight other Senators.*

DUKE.

Antonio, Priuli, senators of Venice,

Speak, why are we assembled here this night?
 What have you to inform us of, concerns
 The state of *Venice*' honour, or its safety?

PRIULI.

Could words express the story I've to tell you,
 Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears
 That fall from my old eyes; but there is cause
 We all should weep, tear off these purple robes,
 And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
 On the sad earth, and cry aloud to Heav'n.
 Heav'n knows if yet there be an hour to come
 Ere *Venice* be no more.

All SENATORS.

How!

PRIULI.

Nay, we stand
 Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
 Within this city's form'd a dark conspiracy,
 To massacre us all, our wives and children,
 Kindreds and friends; our palaces and temples
 To lay in ashes: nay, the hour too fixt;
 The swords, for ought I know, are drawn this moment,
 And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands
 I had this warning: but if we are men
 Let's not be tamely butcher'd, but do something
 That may inform the world in after-ages,
 Our virtue was not ruin'd, tho' we were. [*A noise without.*
 Room, room, make room for some prisoners—

E c 2

SENATORS,

Let's raise the city.

Enter OFFICER and Guard.

PRIULI.

Speak there, what disturbance?

OFFICER.

Two prisoners have the guard seiz'd in the streets,
Who say, they come to inform this reverend senate
About the present danger.

Enter JAFFEIR and BELVIDERA guarded.

ALL.

Give 'em entrance—Well, who are you?

JAFFEIR.

A villain.

ANTONIO.

Short and pithy,
The man speaks well.

JAFFEIR.

Would every man that hears me
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.

DUKE.

'Tis rumour'd, that a plot has been contriv'd
Against this state; that you have a share in't too.
If you're a villain, to redeem your honour,
Unfold the truth, and be restor'd with mercy.

JAFFEIR.

Think not, that I to save my life came hither;
I know its value better; but in pity,
To all those wretches, whose unhappy dooms

A P L O T D I S C O V E R ' D . 217

Are fix'd and seal'd. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of *Venice*.
But use me as my dealings may deserve;
And I may prove a friend.

DUKE.

The slave capitulates,
Give him the tortures.

JAFFEIR.

That you dare not do,
Your fears won't let you, nor the longing itch
To hear a story which you dread the truth of.
Truth, which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from me.
Cowards are scar'd with threatnings: boys are whipt
Into confessions: but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
Give him the tortures! name but such a thing
Again, by Heav'n I'll shut these lips for ever;
Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels,
Shall force a groan away—that you may guess at.

ANTONIO.

A bloody-minded fellow, I'll warrant;
A damn'd bloody-minded fellow.

DUKE.

Name your conditions.

JAFFEIR.

For myself, full pardon,
Besides the lives of two and twenty friends,

[Delivers a list.

Whose names are here enroll'd: nay, let their crimes

218 V E N I C E P R E S E R V ' D ; O r ,

Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths
And sacred promise of this reverend council,
That in a full assembly of the senate
The thing I ask be ratify'd. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secrets of your danger.

A L L .

We'll swear.

D U K E .

Propose the oath.

J A F F E I R .

By all the hopes

Ye have of peace and happiness hereafter
Swear.

A L L .

We all swear.

J A F F E I R .

To grant me what I've ask'd,

Ye swear.

A L L .

We swear.

J A F F E I R .

And as you keep the oath,

May you and your posterity be blest,
Or curst for ever !

A L L .

Else be curst for ever !

J A F F E I R .

Then here's the list, and with't the full disclose
Of all that threatens you. Now, fate, thou'st caught me.

[Delivers another paper.]

A PLOT DISCOVER'D. 219

ANTONIO.

Why what a dreadful catalogue of cut-throats is here ! I'll warrant you, not one of these fellows but has a face like a lion. I dare not so much as read their names over.

DUKE.

Give order that all diligent search be made
To seize these men ; their characters are public.
The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of the fam'd *Grecian* courtesan,
Call'd *Aquilina* ; see that place secur'd.

ANTONIO.

What my Nicky Nacky, hurry durry, Nicky Nacky
in the plot——I'll make a speech——most noble
senators,

What headlong apprehensions drive you on,
Right noble, wise, and truly solid senators,
To violate the laws and right of nations ?
This lady is a lady of renown :
'Tis true, she holds a house of fair reception,
And, tho' I say't myself, as many more
Can say as well as I.

2 SENATOR.

My lord, long speeches
Are frivolous here, when dangers are so near us ;
We all well know your interest in that lady ;
The world talks loud on't.

ANTONIO.

Verily I've done ;

I say no more.

DUKE.

But since he has declar'd
Himself concern'd, pray, captain, take great caution
'To treat the fair one as becomes her character,
And let her bed-chamber be search'd with decency.
You *Jaffeir*, must with patience bear 'till morning
To be our prisoner.

JAFFEIR.

Would the chains of death
Had bound me fast ere I had known this minute.
I've done a deed will make my story hereafter
Quoted in competition with all ill ones:
The history of my wickedness shall run
Down thro' the low traditions of the vulgar,
And boys be taught to tell the tale of *Jaffeir*.

DUKE.

Captain, withdraw your prisoner.

JAFFEIR.

Sir, if possible,
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose
Where I may doze out what I've left of life, [me;
Forget myself and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance, how shall I appease thee!

Ex. guarded. Noise without.

More traitors; room, room, make room there.

DUKE.

How's this? Guards?
Where are our guards? shut up the gates, the treason's

Already at our doors.

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER.

My lords, more traitors,
Seiz'd in the very act of consultation;
Furnish'd with arms and instruments of mischief.
Bring in the prisoners.

*Enter PIERRE, RENAULT, THEODORE, ELIOT,
REVELLIDO, and other Conspirators in fetters,
guarded.*

PIERRE

You, the lords and fathers
(As you are pleas'd to call yourselves) of *Venice*;
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon my limbs
That have so often labour'd in your service?
Are these the wreaths of triumph you bestow
On those that bring you conquests home, and honours?

DUKE.

Go on, you shall be heard, Sir.

ANTONIO.

And be hang'd too, I hope.

PIERRE.

Are these the trophies I've deserv'd, for fighting
Your battles with confederated powers?
When winds and seas conspir'd to overthrow you,
And brought the fleets of *Spain* to your own harbours:
When you, great duke, shrunk, trembling in your palace,
And saw your wife, the *Adriatic*, plough'd,

F f

Like a lewd whore, by bolder prows than yours.
 Stept not I forth, and taught your loose *Venetians*
 The task of honour, and the way to greatness?
 Rais'd you from your capitulating fears,
 To stipulate the terms of su'd-for peace?
 And this my recompence? If I'm a traitor,
 Produce my charge; or shew the wretch that's base
 And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor. [enough,

DUKE.

Know you one *Jaffeir*? [*All the conspirators murmur.*

PIERRE.

Yes, and know his virtue,
 His justice, truth; his general worth and sufferings
 From a hard father taught me first to love him.

Enter JAFFEIR guarded.

DUKE.

See him brought forth.

PIERRE.

My friend too bound! nay then
 Our fate has conquer'd us, and we must fall.
 Why droops the man whose welfare's so much mine,
 They're but one thing? These reverend tyrants, *Jaffeir*,
 Call us all traitors: art thou one, my brother?

JAFFEIR.

To thee I am the falsest, veriest slave
 That e'er betray'd a generous, trusting friend,
 And gave up honour to be sure of ruin!
 All our fair hopes, which morning was to have crown'd,
 Has this curs'd tongue o'erthrown.

PIERRE.

So then, all's over :

Venice has lost her freedom ; I my life ;

No more : farewell.

DUKE.

Say ; will you make confession
Of your vile deeds, and trust the senate's mercy ?

PIERRE.

Curs'd be your senate : curs'd your constitution :
The curse of growing factions and division
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear,
Hateful to you, as these base chains to me.

DUKE.

Pardon, or death ?

PIERRE.

Death ! honourable death !

RENAULT.

Death's the best thing we ask, or you can give.

All CONSPIRATORS.

No shameful bonds, but honourable death.

DUKE.

Break up the council : captain, guard your prisoners.
Jaffair, y'are free, but these must wait for judgment.

[Exeunt all the senators.]

PIERRE.

Come, where's my dungeon ? lead me to my straw :
It will not be the first time I've lodg'd hard
To do the senate service.

JAFFEIR.

Hold one moment.

PIERRE.

Who's he disputes the judgment of the Senate?
 Presumptuous Rebel——on—— [Strikes Jaff.

JAFFEIR.

By Heav'n you stir not.

I must be heard, I must have leave to speak;
 Thou hast disgrac'd me, *Pierre*, by a vile blow:
 But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,
 For I am fall'n beneath the basest injuries;
 Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,
 With pity and with charity behold me;
 Shut not thy heart against a friend's repentance,
 But as there dwells a god-like nature in thee,
 Listen with mildness to my supplications.

PIERRE.

What whining monk art thou? what holy cheat,
 That would'st encroach upon my credulous ears,
 And cant'st thus vilely? Hence. I know thee not.
 Dissemble and be nasty: leave me, hypocrite.

JAFFEIR.

Not know me, *Pierre*!

PIERRE.

No, I know thee not: what art thou?

JAFFEIR.

Jaffeir, thy friend, thy once lov'd, valu'd friend!
 Tho' now deserv'dly scorn'd, and us'd most hardly.

PIERRE.

Thou *Jaffair*! thou my once lov'd, valu'd friend!
 By Heav'ns thou ly'st; the man so call'd, my friend,
 Was generous, honest, faithful, just and valiant,
 Noble in mind, and in his person lovely,
 Dear to my eyes, and tender to my heart:
 But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,
 Poor, even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect:
 All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
 Pr'ythee avoid, nor longer cling thus round me,
 Like something baneful, that my nature's chill'd at.

JAFFEIR.

I have not wrong'd thee, by these tears I have not,
 But still am honest, true, and hope too, valiant;
 My mind still full of thee; therefor still noble.
 Let not thy eyes then shun me, nor thy heart
 Detest me utterly: oh, look upon me,
 Look back and see my sad, sincere submission!
 How my heart swells, as ev'n 'twould burst my bosom;
 Fond of its goal, and labouring to be at thee!
 What shall I do? what say to make thee hear me?

PIERRE.

Hast thou not wrong'd me? dar'st thou call thyself,
 That once lov'd, honest, valu'd friend of mine, [chains?
 And swear thou hast not wrong'd me? Whence these
 Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment?
 Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false one?

JAFFEIR.

—All's true, yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.

PIERRE.

What's that?

JAFFEIR.

To take thy life on such conditions
The council have propos'd: thou and thy friends
May yet live long, and to be better treated.

PIERRE.

Life! ask my life! confess! record myself
A villain for the privilege to breathe,
And carry up and down this cursed city
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burdenfom to itself, a few years longer,
To lose it, may be, at last in a lewd quarrel
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou art!
No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men like thee are fit to live in't.

JAFFEIR.

By all that's just——

PIERRE.

Swear by some other powers,
For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.

JAFFEIR.

Then, by that hell I merit, I'll not leave thee
Till to thyself at least thou'rt reconcil'd;
However thy resentment deal with me.

PIERRE.

Not leave me!

JAFFEIR.

No; thou shalt not force me from thee:
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head; I'll bear it all with patience,
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty:
Lie at thy feet and kiss 'em, tho' they spurn me,
'Till wounded by my sufferings, you relent,
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.

PIERRE.

Art thou not——

JAFFEIR.

What?

PIERRE.

A traitor?

JAFFEIR.

Yes.

PIERRE.

A villain?

JAFFEIR.

Granted,

PIERRE.

A coward, a most scandalous coward,
Spiritless, void of honour, one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame for shameless life?

JAFFEIR [numberless.

All, all, and more, much more; my faults are

PIERRE.

And would'st thou have me live on terms like thine?

228 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
Base as thou'rt false ———

JAFFEIR.

No, 'tis to me that's granted.
The safety of thy life was all I aim'd at,
In recompence for faith and trust so broken.

PIERRE.

I scorn it more, because preserv'd by thee :
And as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, fought thee in thy miseries,
Reliev'd thy wants, and rais'd thee from thy state
Of wretchedness in which thy fate had plung'd thee;
To rank thee in my list of noble friends ;
All I receiv'd in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths ; and this, this dagger,
Giv'n with a worthless pledge, thou since hast stol'n ;
So I restore it back to thee again ;
Swearing by all those Powers which thou hast violated,
Never from this curs'd hour to hold communion,
Friendship or interest with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.
Take it—farewel——for now I owe thee nothing.

JAFFEIR.

Say thou wilt live then.

PIERRE.

For my life, dispose it,
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tir'd with.

JAFFEIR.

Oh *Pierre!*

PIERRE.

No more.

JAFFEIR.

My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
I languish after thine, and ache with gazing.

PIERRE.

Leave me—Nay, then thus, I throw thee from me;
I curse thee great, as is thy falshood, catch thee. [*Exit.*]

JAFFEIR.

men.

gone, my father, friend, preserver,
here's the portion he has left me, [*holds the dagger up.*]
this dagger; well remember'd, with this dagger

I've a solemn vow of dire importance;
sworn with this and *Belvidera* together.

Let a care, mem'ry, drive that thought no farther;

I'll esteem it as a friend's last legacy,
I'll assure it up within this wretched bosom,
where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
that, when they meet, they start not from each other.

Now for thinking: a blow, call'd traitor, villain,
hard, dishonourable coward, fough!

For a long sound sleep, and so forget it!

Down, busy devil——

Enter BELVIDERA.

BELVIDERA.

Whither shall I fly?

Where hide me and my miseries together?

Where's now the *Roman* constancy I boasted?

G g

230 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

Sunk into trembling fears and desperation !
Not daring now to look to that dear face
Which us'd to smile ev'n on my faults, but down
Bending these miserable eyes to earth,
Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.

JAFFEIR.

Mercy ! kind Heav'n has surely endless stores
Hoarded for thee of blessings yet untasted ;
Let wretches loaded hard with guilt, as I am,
Bow with the weight, and grone beneath the burden,
Creep with a remnant of that strength th' have left,
Before the footstool of that Heav'n th' have injur'd.
Oh *Belvidera* ! I'm the wretched'st creature
E'er crawl'd on earth : now if thou'ast virtue, help me,
Take me into thy arms, and speak the words of peace
To my divided soul, that wars within me,
And raises every sense to my confusion ;
By Heav'n I'm tottering to the very brink
Of peace : and thou art all the hold I've left.

BELVIDERA.

Alas ! I know thy sorrows are most mighty ;
I know thou'ast cause to mourn, to mourn, my *Jaffeir*,
With endless cries, and never-ceasing wailing.
Thou'ast lost——

JAFFEIR.

Oh I have lost what can't be counted.
My friend, too, *Belvidera* ; that dear friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoic'd in,
Has us'd me like a slave ; shamefully us'd me ;

'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.
What shall I do? Resentment, indignation,
Love, pity, fear, and mem'ry, how I've wrong'd him,
Distract my quiet with the very thought on't,
And tear my heart to pieces in my bosom.

BELVIDERA.

What has he done?

JAFFEIR.

Thou'dst hate me, should I tell thee.

BELVIDERA.

Why?

JAFFEIR.

Oh he has us'd me! yet by Heav'n I bear it;
He has us'd me, *Belvidera*; but first swear
That when I've told thee, thou'lt not lothe me utterly,
Tho' vilest blots and stains appear upon me;
But still at least with charitable goodness,
Be near me in the pangs of my affliction;
Not scorn me, *Belvidera*, as he has done.

BELVIDERA.

Have I then e'er been false, that now I'm doubted?
Speak, what's the cause I'm grown into distrust?
Why thought unfit to hear my love's complaining?

JAFFEIR.

Oh!

BELVIDERA.

Tell me.

JAFFEIR.

Bear my failings, for they're many.

232 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

O my dear angel ! in that friend I've lost
All my soul's peace ; for every thought of him
Strikes my sense hard, and dead's it in my brains ;
Wouldst thou believe it ?

BELVIDERA.

Speak.

JAFFEIR.

Before we parted,
Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,
Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,
With eyes o'erflowing, and a bleeding heart,
Humbling myself almost beneath my nature ;
As at his feet I kneel'd and su'd for mercy,
Forgetting all our friendship, all the dearest
In which we've liv'd so many years together,
With a reproachful hand, he dash'd a blow :
He struck me, *Belvidera*, by Heav'n, he struck me,
Buffeted, call'd me traitor, villain, coward.
Am I a coward ? am I a villain ? tell me :
Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so.
Damnation ! coward !

BELVIDERA.

O forgive him, *Jaffeir*.

And if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
What will they do to-morrow ?

JAFFEIR.

Ha !

BELVIDERA.

To-morrow,

When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the agonies
Of a tormenting and a shameful death;
His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,
Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain;
What will thy heart do then? Oh sure 'twill stream
Like my eyes now.

JAFFEIR.

What means thy dreadful story.
Death, and to-morrow? Broken limbs, and bowels?
Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain?
By all my fears I shall start out to madness
With barely guessing, if the truth's hid longer.

BELVIDERA.

The faithless senators, 'tis they've decreed it:
They say, according to our friend's request,
They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage:
Declare their promis'd mercy all as forfeited:
False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession;
Warrants are pass'd for public death to-morrow.

JAFFEIR. [unpleaded!

Death! doom'd to die! condemn'd! unheard!

BELVIDERA.

Nay, cruel'st racks and torments are preparing,
To force confessions from their dying pangs.
Oh do not look so terribly upon me;
How your lips shake, and all your face disorder'd!
What means my love?

JAFFEIR.

Leave me, I charge thee leave me—strong temptations

234 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,
Wake in my heart.

BELVIDERA.

For what?

JAFFEIR.

No more, but leave me.

BELVIDERA.

Why?

JAFFEIR.

Oh! by Heav'n I love thee with that fondness,
I would not have thee stay a moment longer,
Near these curst hands: are they not cold upon thee?
[Pulls the dagger out of his bosom and puts it back again.]

BELVIDERA.

No: everlasting comfort's in thy arms.
To lean thus on thy breast is softer ease,
Than downy pillows deck'd with leaves of roses.

JAFFEIR.

Alas! thou think'st not of the thorns 'tis fill'd with:
Fly, ere they gall thee: there's a lurking serpent
Ready to leap, and sting thee to thy heart:
Art thou not terrify'd?

BELVIDERA.

No.

JAFFEIR.

Call to mind [me,

What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought

BELVIDERA.

Hah!

JAFFEIR.

Where's my friend, my friend ? thou smiling mischief !
Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late, thou shouldst have fled
When thy guilt first had cause ; for dire revenge
Is up, and raging for my friend. He groans !
Hark how he groans, his screams are in my ears
Already ; see, they've fix'd him on the wheel,
And now they tear him—Murder ! perjur'd senate !
Murder—Oh !—hark ye, traitress, thou hast done this ;
Thanks to thy tears and false persuading love.
How her eyes speak ! O thou bewitching creature !

[Fumbling for his dagger.]

Madness can't hurt thee : come thou little trembler,
Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe ;
'Tis thy own citadel—hah—yet stand off,
Heav'n must have justice, and my broken vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy ;
I'll wink, and then 'tis done——

BELVIDERA.

What means the lord
Of me, my life and love ? what's in thy bosom,
Thou grasp'st at so ? nay, why am I thus treated ?

[Draws the dagger, offers to stab her.]

What wilt thou do ? Ah ! do not kill me, *Jaffeir* :
Pity these panting breasts, and trembling limbs,
That us'd to clasp thee when thy looks were milder,
That yet hang heavy on my unpurg'd soul :
And plunge it not into eternal darkness.

JAFFEIR.

No, *Belvidera*, when we parted last,
 I gave this dagger with thee as in trust,
 To be thy portion; if I ere prov'd false.
 On such condition was my truth believ'd:
 But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for.

[*Offers to stab her again.*]

BELVIDERA.

Oh, mercy!

[*Kneeling.*]

JAFFEIR.

Nay, no struggling.

BELVIDERA.

Now then kill me.

[*Leaps upon his neck and kisses him.*]

While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,
 Kiss thy revengeful lips, and die in joys
 Greater than any I can guess hereafter.

JAFFEIR.

I am, I am a coward; witness Heav'n,
 Witness it, earth, and every being, witness;
 'Tis but one blow! Yet by immortal love,
 I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee.

[*He throws away the dagger and embraces her.*]

The seal of providence is sure upon thee;
 And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders:
 Oh thou wert either born to save or damn me!
 By all the power that's given thee o'er my soul,
 By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,
 By the victorious love that still waits on thee;

Fly to thy cruel father ; save my friend,
 Or all our future quiet's lost for ever :
 Fall at his feet, cling round his reverend knees ;
 Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears
 Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him,
 Crush him in th' arms, torture him with thy softness ;
 Nor 'till thy prayers are granted, set him free,
 But conquer him, as thou hast conquer'd me. [*Exe.*

A C T V. S C E N E I.

Enter PRIULI solus.

PRIULI.

WH Y, cruel Heav'n, have my unhappy days
 Been lengthen'd to this sad one ? Oh ! dishonour
 And deathless infamy are fall'n upon me.
 Was it my fault ? Am I traitor ? No.
 But then, my only child, my daughter, wedded ;
 There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
 Incurable has seiz'd upon my memory,
 To make it rot and stink to after-ages.
 Curs'd be the fatal minute when I got her,
 Or would that I'd been any thing but man,
 And rais'd an issue which would ne'er have wrong'd me.
 The miserablest creatures (man excepted)
 Are not the less esteem'd, tho' their posterity
 Degenerate from the virtues of their fathers ;

H h

238 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

The vilest beasts are happy in their off-springs,
While only man gets traitors, whores, and villains.
Curst be the name, and some swift blow from fate
Lay his head deep, where mine may be forgotten.

Enter BELVIDERA in a long mourning vail.

BELVIDERA.

He's there, my father, my inhuman father,
That, for three years, has left an only child
Expos'd to all the outrages of fate,
And cruel ruin—oh!——

PRIULI.

What child of sorrow
Art thou that com'st thus wrapp'd in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were towards a grave?

BELVIDERA.

A wretch, who from the very top of happiness
Am fall'n into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up.

PRIULI.

Indeed thou talk'st as thou hadst tasted sorrows;
Would I could help thee.

BELVIDERA.

'Tis greatly in your power:
The world too speaks you charitable; and I,
Who ne'er ask'd alms before, in that dear hope
Am come a begging to you, Sir.

PRIULI.

For what?

BELVIDERA.

Oh, well regard me ! is this voice a strange one ?
 Consider too, when beggars once pretend
 A case like mine, no little will content 'em.

PRIULI.

What would'st thou beg for ?

BELVIDERA.

Pity and forgiveness. [*Throws up her veil.*
 By the kind tender names of child and father,
 Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.

PRIULI.

My daughter ?

BELVIDERA.

Yes, your daughter by a mother
 Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honour,
 Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,
 Dear to your arms. By all the joys she gave you,
 When in her blooming years she was your treasure,
 Look kindly on me ; in my face behold
 The lineaments of hers you've kiss'd so often,
 Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off child.

PRIULI.

Thou art my daughter.

BELVIDERA.

Yes——and you've oft told me
 With smiles of love, and chaste paternal kisses,
 I'd much resemblance of my mother.

PRIULI.

Oh !

H h 2

230 VENICE PRESERV'D: Or,

Hadst thou inherited her matchless virtues,
I'd been too blest'd.

BELVIDERA.

Nay, do not call to memory
My disobedience, but let pity enter
Into your heart, and quite deface th' impression.
For could you think how mine's perplext, what sadness,
Fears and despairs distract the peace within me,
Oh! you would take me in your dear, dear arms,
Hover with strong compassion o'er your young one,
To shelter me with a protecting wing
From the black gather'd storm, that's just, just breaking.

PRIULI.

Don't talk thus.

BELVIDERA.

Yes, I must, and you must hear too.
I have a husband.

PRIULI.

Damn him.

BELVIDERA.

Oh! do not curse him;
He would not speak so hard a word towards you
On any terms, howe'er he deal with me.

PRIULI.

Hah! what means my child?

BELVIDERA.

Oh! there's but this short moment
'Twixt me and fate: yet send me not with curses
Down to my grave; afford me one kind blessing

Before we part: just take me in your arms,
And recommend me with a prayer to Heav'n,
That I may die in peace; and when I'm dead——

PRIULI.

How my soul's catch'd?

BELVIDERA.

Lay me, I beg you, lay me
By the dear ashes of my tender mother.
She would have pitied me, had fate yet spar'd her.

PRIULI.

By Heav'n, my aking heart forebodes much mischief.
Tell me thy story, for I'm still thy father.

BELVIDERA.

No, I'm still contented.

PRIULI.

Speak.

BELVIDERA.

No matter.

PRIULI.

Tell me.

By yon blest Heav'n, my heart runs o'er with fondness:

BELVIDERA.

Oh!

PRIULI.

Utter't.

BELVIDERA.

Oh, my husband, my dear husband,
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor *Belvidera*.

Kill thee !

BELVIDERA.

Yes kill me. 'When he pass'd his faith
And covenant against your state and senate ;
He gave me up as hostage for his truth :
With me a dagger, and a dire commission,
Whene'er he fail'd, to plunge it through this bosom.
I learn'd the danger, chose the hour of love
T'attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.
Great love prevail'd, and bless'd me with success ;
He came, confess'd, betray'd his dearest friends,
For promis'd mercy. Now they're doom'd to suffer ;
Gall'd with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows t'appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood th'attonment.

PRIULI.

Heav'ns !

BELVIDERA.

Think you saw what past at our last parting ;
Think you beheld him like a raging lion,
Pacing the earth, and tearing up his steps,
Fate in his eyes, and roaring with the pain
Of burning fury ; think you saw one hand
Fixt on my throat, whilst the extended other
Grasp'd a keen threat'ning dagger ; Oh ! twas thus
We last embrac'd ; when trembling with revenge,
He dragg'd me to the ground, and at my bosom

A PLOT DISCOVER'D 233

Presented horrid death; cry'd out, my friends, [lov'd;
Where are my friends? swore, wept, rag'd, threaten'd,
For yet he lov'd, and that dear love preserv'd me,
To this last trial of a father's pity.

I fear not death, but cannot bear a thought
That that dear hand should do the unfriendly office.
If I was ever then your care, now hear me;
Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

PRIULI.

Oh, my heart's comfort!

BELVIDERA.

Will you not, my father?

Weep not, but answer me.

PRIULI.

By Heav'n, I will.

Not one of 'em but what shall be immortal.
Can't thou forgive me all my follies past,
I'll henceforth be indeed a father; never,
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life,
Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee.
Peace to thy heart. Farewel.

BELVIDERA.

Go, and remember

'Tis *Belvidera's* life her father pleads for. [*Ex. severally.*]

Enter ANTONIO.

ANTONIO.

Hum, hum, hah.

I'll swear; well, I'll protest, Nacky, nay, I must protest, and will protest, that I love joking dearly, man. And I love thee for joking, and I'll kiss thee for joking, and towse thee for joking; and, odd, I have a devilish mind to take thee aside about that business, for joking too; odd I have, and *Hey, then up go we,* dum dum derum dump. [Sings.

AQUILINA.

See you this, Sir?

[*Draws a dagger.*

ANTONIO.

O Laud, a dagger! Oh Laud! it is naturally my aversion, I cannot endure the sight of't; hide it for Heaven's sake, I cannot look that way 'till it be gone——hide it, hide it, oh, oh, hide it!

AQUILINA.

Yes, in your heart I'll hide it.

ANTONIO.

My heart; what hide a dagger in my heart's blood!

AQUILINA.

Yes, in thy heart, thy throat, thou pamper'd devil; Thou hast help'd to spoil my peace, and I'll have On thy curst life, for all the bloody senate, [vengeance The perjur'd faithless senate: where's my lord, My happiness, my love, my god, my hero? Doom'd by thy accursed tongue, amongst the rest, T'a shameful rack? By all the rage that's in me, I'll be whole years in murdering thee.

ANTONIO.

Why, Nacky,

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Wherefor so passionate? what have I done? what's the matter, my dear Nacky? Am not I thy love, thy happiness, thy lord, thy hero, thy senator, and every thing in the world, Nacky?

AQUILINA.

Thou! think'st thou, thou art fit to meet my joys;
To bear the eager clasps of my embraces?
Give me my *Pierre*, or——

ANTONIO.

Why, he's to be hang'd, little Nacky;
Truss'd up for treason, and so forth, child.

AQUILINA.

Thouly'st; stop down thy throat that hellish sentence,
Or 'tis thy last: swear that my love shall live,
Or thou art dead.

ANTONIO.

Ah, h h h.

AQUILINA.

Swear to recall his doom;
Swear at my feet, and tremble at my fury.

ANTONIO.

I do: now if she would but kick a little bit, one kick
Ah, h h h. [now,

AQUILINA.

Swear or——

ANTONIO.

I do; by these dear fragrant foots,
And little toes, sweet as, eee. my Nacky, Nacky, Nacky.

AQUILINA.

How!

ANTONIO.

[troth,

Nothing but unty thy shoe-strings a little, faith and
That's all, that's all, as I hope to live, Nacky, that's all.

AQUILINA.

Nay then——

ANTONIO.

Hold, hold; thy love, thy lord, thy hero
Shall be preserv'd and safe.

AQUILINA.

Or may this poinard

Rust in thy heart.

ANTONIO.

With all my soul.

AQUILINA.

Farewel—— [Ex. Aquil.

ANTONIO.

Adieu. Why, what a bloody-minded inveterate
termagant strumpet have I been plagu'd with! oh, h, h!
Yet more! nay then I die, I die—I am dead already.

[Stretches out himself.

Enter JAFFEIR.

JAFFEIR.

Final destruction seize on all the world:
Bend down, ye Heavens, and shutting round this earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusion;
Scorch it with elemental flames to one curs'd cinder,
And all us little creepers in't call'd men,

Burn, burn to nothing : but let *Venice* burn
Hotter than all the rest : here kindle hell,
Ne'er to extinguish; and let souls hereafter
Grone here, in all those pains which mine feels now.

Enter BELVIDERA.

BELVIDERA.
My life—— *[Meeting him.]*

JAFFEIR.
My plague—— *[Turning from her.]*

BELVIDERA.
Nay then, I see my ruin :
If I must die!

JAFFEIR.
No, death's this day too busy;
Thy father's ill-tim'd mercy came too late.
I thank thee for thy labours tho,' and him too.
But all my poor betray'd unhappy friends
Have summons to prepare for fate's black hour;
And yet I live.

BELVIDERA.
Then be the next my doom;
I see thou hast past my sentence in thy heart,
And I'll no longer weep or plead against it,
But with the humblest, most obedient patience
Meet thy dear hands, and kiss 'em when they wound me.
Indeed I am willing, but I beg thee do it
With some remorse; and when thou giv'st the blow,
View me with eyes of a relenting love,
And shew me pity, for 'twill sweeten justice.

JAFFEIR.

Shew pity to thee !

BELVIDERA.

Yes; and when thy hands,
 Charg'd with my fate, come trembling to the deed,
 As thou hast done a thousand thousand times
 To this poor breast, when kinder rage has brought thee,
 When our stung hearts have leapt to meet each other,
 And melting kisses seal'd our lips together;
 When joys have left me gasping in thy arms:
 So let my death come now, and I'll not shrink from't.

JAFFEIR.

Nay, *Belvidera*, do not fear my cruelty,
 Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy;
 But answer me to what I shall demand,
 With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.

BELVIDERA.

I will, when I've done weeping——

JAFFEIR.

Fie, no more on't——

How long is't since that miserable day
 We wedded first?

BELVIDERA.

Oh!

JAFFEIR.

Nay, keep in thy tears,
 Left they unman me too.

BELVIDERA.

Heav'n knows, I cannot;

The words you utter sound so very sadly,
These streams will follow—

JAFFEIR.

Come, I'll kiss 'em dry then.

BELVIDERA.

But was't a miserable day?

JAFFEIR.

A curst one.

BELVIDERA.

I thought it otherwise; and you've oft sworn
In the transporting hours of warmest love, [it.
When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn you blest'd

JAFFEIR.

'Twas a rash oath.

BELVIDERA.

Then, why am I not curs'd too?

JAFFEIR.

No, *Belvidera*, by th' eternal truth,
I doat with too much fondness.

BELVIDERA.

Still so-kind!

Still then do you love me?

JAFFEIR.

Nature, in her workings,
Inclines not with more ardour to creation,
Than I do now towards thee: man ne'er was blest'd,
Since the first pair first met as I have been.

BELVIDERA.

Then sure you will not curse me.

JAFFEIR.

No, I'll bless thee.

I came on purpose, *Belvidera*, to bless thee.

'Tis now, I think, three years we've liv'd together.

BELVIDERA.

And may no fatal minute ever part us,
Till reverend grown, for age and love, we go
Down to one grave, as our last bed together;
There sleep in peace, till an eternal morning.

JAFFEIR.

When will that be?

[Sighing.]

BELVIDERA.

I hope long ages hence.

JAFFEIR.

Have I not hitherto (I beg thee tell me
Thy very fears) us'd thee with tender't love?
Did e'er my soul rise up in wrath against thee?
Did I e'er frown when *Belvidera* smil'd?
Or, by the least unfriendly word, betray
Abating passion? have I ever wrong'd thee?

BELVIDERA.

No.

JAFFEIR.

Has my heart, or have my eyes e'er wander'd
To any other woman!

BELVIDERA.

Never, never—

I were the worst of false ones, should I accuse thee.

I own I've been too happy, blest'd above
My sex's charter.

JAFFEIR.

Did I not say I came to blest thee?

BELVIDERA.

Yes.

JAFFEIR.

Then hear me, bounteous Heav'n;
Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,
Where everlasting sweets are always springing,
With a continual giving hand; let peace,
Honour, and safety always hover round her:
Feed her with plenty, let her eyes ne'er see
A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning:
Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,
Harmless as her own thoughts; and prop her virtue,
To bear the loss of one that too much lov'd;
And comfort her with patience in our parting.

BELVIDERA.

How, parting, parting?

JAFFEIR.

Yes, for ever parting;
I have sworn, *Belvidera*, by yon Heav'n,
That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
We part this hour for ever.

BELVIDERA.

Oh call back
Your cruel blessing; stay with me and curse me!

K k

JAFFEIR.

No, 'tis resolv'd.

BELVIDERA.

Then hear me too, just Heav'n;

Pour down your curses on this wretched head
With never-ceasing vengeance; let despair,
Danger, or infamy, nay, all surround me;
Starve me with wantings; let my eyes ne'er see
A sight or comfort, nor my heart know peace;
But dash my days with sorrow, nights with horrors,
Wild as my own thoughts now, and let loose fury
To make me mad enough for what I lose,
If I must lose him. If I must? I will not,
Oh turn and hear me.

JAFFEIR.

Now hold, heart, or never.

BELVIDERA.

By all the tender days we've liv'd together,
By all our charming nights, and joys that crown'd 'em,
Pity my sad condition; speak, but speak.

JAFFEIR.

Oh!

BELVIDERA.

By these arms that now cling round thy neck,
By this dear kiss, and by ten thousand more,
By these poor streaming eyes——

JAFFEIR.

Murder! un-hold me:

By the immortal destiny that doom'd me
[Draws his dagger.

To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer;
Resolve to let me go, or see me fall—

BELVIDERA.

Hold, Sir, be patient.

JAFFIER.

Hark, the dismal bell [*Passing-bell tolls.*
Tolls out for death! I must attend its call too;
For my poor friend, my dying *Pierre*, expects me;
He sent a message to require I'd see him
Before he dy'd, and take his last forgiveness.
Farewel for ever.

BELVIDERA.

Leave thy dagger with me.
Bequeath me something—Not one kiss at parting?
Oh my poor heart, when wilt thou break?

[*Going out, looks back at her.*

JAFFIER.

Yet stay.

We have a child, as yet a tender infant;
Be a kind mother to him when I'm gone,
Breed him in virtue, and the paths of honour,
But let him never know his father's story;
I charge thee guard him from the wrongs my fate
May do his future fortune, or his name.
Now—nearer yet— [*Approaching each other.*
Oh that my arms were rivetted
Thus round thee ever! but my friends! my oath!
This, and no more. [*Kisses her.*

BELVIDERA.

Another, sure another,
For that poor little one you've ta'en such care of,
I'll give't him truly.

JAFFEIR.

So, now farewell.

BELVIDERA.

For ever?

JAFFEIR.

Heav'n knows for ever; all good angels guard thee.

[Exit,

BELVIDERA.

All ill ones sure had charge of me this moment,
Curst be my days, and doubly curst my nights,
Which I must now mourn out in widow'd tears;
Blasted be every herb, and fruit, and tree;
Curst be the rain that falls upon the earth,
And may the general curse reach man and beast;
O give me daggers, fire or water!
How I could bleed, how burn, how drown the waves
Huzzing and booming round my sinking head,
Till I descended to the peaceful bottom!
Oh, there's all quiet, here all rage and fury!
The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain:
I long for thick substantial sleep: hell! hell!
Burst from the center, rage and roar aloud,
If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am.

Enter PRIULI and servants.

Who's there?

[They seize her,

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PRIULI.

Run, seize, and bring her safely home,
Guard her as you would, life : alas, poor creature !

BELVIDERA.

What, to my husband ? then conduct me quickly ;
Are all things ready ? shall we die most gloriously ?
Say not a word of this to my old father :
Murmuring streams, soft shades, and springing flowers,
Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber. [*Ex.*

SCENE opening, discovers a scaffold, and a wheel
prepared for the executing of Pierre ; then enter
officers, Pierre, and guards, a friar, executioner,
and a great rabble.

OFFICER.

Room, room there——stand all by, make room for
the prisoner.

PIERRE.

My friend not yet come ?

FRIAR.

Why are you so obstinate ?

PIERRE.

Why you so troublesome, that a poor wretch
Can't die in peace,
But you, like ravens, will be croaking round him ?

FRIAR.

Yet, Heav'n——

PIERRE.

I tell thee, Heav'n and I are friends :

248 VENICE PRESERV'D: OR,

I ne'er broke peace with't yet by cruel murders,
 Rapine or perjury, or vile deceiving :
 But liv'd in moral justice towards all men ;
 Nor am a foe to the most strong believers,
 Howe'er my own short-sighted faith confine me.

FRIAR.

But an All-seeing judge—

PIERRE.

You say my conscience
 Must be my accuser : I have search'd that conscience,
 And find no records there of crimes that scare me.

FRIAR.

'Tis strange you should want faith.

PIERRE.

You want to lead
 My reason blindfold, like a hamper'd lion,
 Check'd of its nobler vigour : then when baited
 Down to obedient tameness, make it couch,
 And shew strange tricks, which you call signs of faith.
 So silly souls are gull'd, and you get money.
 Away, no more : Captain, I'd have hereafter
 This fellow write no lies of my conversion,
 Because he has crept upon my troubled hours.

Enter JAFFEIR.

JAFFEIR.

Hold : eyes be dry ; heart strengthen me to bear
 This hideous fight, and humble me to take
 The last forgiveness of a dying friend,
 Betray'd by my vile falshood to his ruin.
Oh, Pierre !

PIERRE.

Yet nearer.

JAFFEIR.

Crawling on my knees,
And prostrate on the earth, let me approach thee:
How shall I look up to thy injur'd face,
That always us'd to smile with friendship on me?
It darts an air of so much manly virtue,
That I, methinks, look little in thy sight,
And stripes are fitter for me than embraces.

PIERRE.

Dear to my arms, tho' thou'st undone my fame,
I can't forget to love thee: pr'ythee, *Jaffeir*,
Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee;
I'm now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.

JAFFEIR.

Good! I'm the vilest creature, worse than e'er
Suffer'd the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.
Why was I sent for to be us'd thus kindly?
Call, call me villain, as I am; describe
The foul complexion of my hateful deeds;
Lead me to th' rack, and stretch me in thy stead,
I've crimes enough to give it its full load,
And do it credit: thou wilt but spoil the use on't,
And honest men hereafter bear its figure
About 'em as a charm from treacherous friendship.

OFFICER.

The time grows short, your friends are dead already.

JAFFEIR.

Dead!

PIERRE.

Yes, dead, *Jaffeir*; they've all dy'd like men too,
Worthy their character.

JAFFEIR.

And what must I do?

PIERRE.

Oh, *Jaffeir*!

JAFFEIR.

Speak aloud thy burden'd soul,
And tell thy troubles to thy tortur'd friend.

PIERRE.

Friend!

Couldst thou yet be a friend, a generous friend,
I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
Heav'n knows I want a friend.

JAFFEIR.

And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think, when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.

PIERRE.

No: live, I charge thee, *Jaffeir*.

JAFFEIR.

Yes, I'll live.

But it shall be to see thy fall reveng'd
At such a rate, as *Venice* long shall groan for.

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PIERRE.

Wilt thou?

JAFFEIR.

I will, by Heav'n.

PIERRE.

Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh——yet——shall I trust thee?

JAFFEIR.

No, I've been false already.

PIERRE.

Dost thou love me?

JAFFEIR.

Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.

PIERRE.

Curse on this weakness.

[*He weeps.*]

JAFFEIR.

Tears! amazement! tears!

I never saw thee melted thus before;

And know there's something labouring in thy bosom
That must have vent: tho' I'm a villain, tell me.

PIERRE.

See'st thou that engine? [*Pointing to the wheel.*]

JAFFEIR.

Why?

PIERRE.

Is't fit a soldier, who has liv'd with honour,
Fought nations quarrels, and been crown'd with
Be expos'd a common carcase on a wheel? [*conquest.*]

JAFFEIR.

Hah!

PIERRE.

Speak! is't fitting?

JAFFEIR.

Fitting?

PIERRE.

Yes, is't fitting?

JAFFEIR.

What's to be done?

PIERRE.

I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble, to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attain it.

OFFICER.

The day grows late, Sir.

PIERRE.

I'll make haste! Oh, Jaffeir!
Tho' thou'lt betray'd me, do me some way justice.

JAFFEIR.

No more of that: thy wishes shall be satisfy'd;
I have a wife, and she shall bleed; my child too
Yield up his little throat, and all t'appease thee——

[*Going away, Pierre holds him.*]

PIERRE.

No——this——no more! [*He whispers Jaffeir.*]

JAFFEIR.

Hah! Is't then so?

PIERRE.

Most certainly.

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JAFFIER.

I'll do't.

PIERRE.

Remember.

OFFICER.

Sir.

PIERRE.

Come, now I am ready.

[He and Jaffier ascend the Scaffold.]

Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour,
Keep off the rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my fate, and die with decency.
Come!

[Takes off his gown, Executioner prepares to bind him.]

FRIAR.

Son!

PIERRE.

Hence, Tempter.

OFFICER.

Stand off, Priest.

PIERRE.

I thank you, Sir;

You'll think on't?

[To Jaffier.]

JAFFIER.

'Twon't grow stale before to-morrow

PIERRE.

Now, *Jaffier!* now I am going. Now; —

[Executioners having bound him.]

JAFFEIR.

Have at thee,

Thou honest heart, then—here— [Stabs him.

And this is well too. [Then stabs himself.

PRIAR.

Damnable deed!

PIERRE.

Now thou hast indeed been faithful.

This was done nobly—We have deceived the Senate.

JAFFEIR.

Bravely.

PIERRE.

Ha, ha, ha—oh, oh— [Dies.

JAFFEIR.

Now ye curs'd rulers,

Thus of the blood y've shed I make libation,

And sprinkle't mingling: may it rest upon you,

And all your race: be henceforth peace a stranger

Within your walls; let plagues and famine waste

Your generation—O poor *Belvidera*!

Sir, I have a wife, bear this in safety to her,

A token, that with my dying breath I blest'd her,

And the dear little Infant left behind me.

I'm sick—I'm quiet—

[Jaffeir dies.

OFFICER.

Bear this news to the Senate,

And guard their bodies 'till there's farther order:

Heav'n grant I die so well— *Scene shuts upon them.**Soft music. Enter BELVIDERA distracted, led by two
of her women, PRIULI and servants.*

PAULI.

Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying Heav'n!

BELVIDERA.

Come, come, come, come, come, nay come to bed,
Br'ythee, my love. The winds; hark how they whistle?
And the rain beats: Oh how the weather shrinks me!
You are angry now, who cares? Pish, no indeed.
Chuse then. I say you shall not go, you shall not.
Whip your ill-nature; get you gone then; oh!

[*Jaffair's ghost rises.*

Are you return'd? See, father, here he's come again.
Am I to blame to love him? Oh! thou dear one,

[*Ghost sinks.*

Why do you fly me? Are you angry then?

Jaffair, where art thou? father, why do you do thus?
Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's here some-

[*where.*

Stand off I say: what, gone? remember't, Tyrant!
I may revenge me for this trick one day.

I'll do't—I'll do't. *Renault's* a nasty fellow;

Hang him, hang him, hang him.

Enter OFFICER and others.

PAULI.

News, what news? [*Officer whispers PAULI.*

OFFICER.

Most sad, Sir.

Jaffair, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabb'd *Pierre*, and next himself;
Both fell together.

PRIULI.

Daughter.

BELVIDERA.

Ha, look there !

*The ghost of JAFFIER and PIERRE rise together
both bloody.*

My husband bloody, and his friend too ! Murder !

Who has done this ? speak to me, thou sad vision ;

[*Ghosts sink.*

On these poor trembling knees I beg it : vanish'd —

Here they went down ; Oh ! I'll dig, dig the den up.

You shan't delude me thus. Hoa, *Jaffeir, Jaffeir!*

Peep up and give me but a look. I have him !

I've got him, father : Oh ! how I'll smuggle him !

My love ! my dear ! my blessing ! help me ! help me !

They have hold on me, and drag me to the bottom.

Nay — now they pull so hard — farewell — [*She dies.*

MAID.

She's dead,

Breathless and dead.

PRIULI.

Then guard me from the sight on't :

Lead me into some place that's fit for mourning ;

Where the free air, light, and the chearful sun

May never enter : hang it round with black ;

Set up one taper that may light a day,

As long as I've to live : and there all leave me :

Sparing no tears when you this tale relate,

But bid all cruel fathers dread my fate.

Curtain falls.

Exeunt Omnes.

EPILOGUE.

*THE text is done, and now for application,
And when that's ended, pass your approbation.
Though the conspiracy's prevented here,
Methinks I see another hatching there;
And there's a certain faction^o fain would sway,
If they had strength enough, and damn this play:
But this the author bade me boldly say;
If any take this plainness in ill part
He's glad on't from the bottom of his heart.
Poets in honour of the truth should write,
With the same spirit brave men for it fight.
And though against him causeless hatreds rise,
And daily where he goes of late, he spies
The scowles of sullen and revengeful eyes;
'Tis what he knows, with much contempt, to bear,
And serves a cause too good to let him fear:
He fears no poison from an incens'd drab,
No ruffian's five-foot sword, nor rascal's stab;
Nor any other snares of mischief laid,
Not a rose-ally cudgel-ambuscade,
From any private cause where malice reigns,
Or general pique all blockheads have to brains:
Nothing shall daunt his pen when truth does call;
No, not the* picture-mangler at Guild-Hall.
The rebel-tribe, of which that vermin's one,
Have now set forward, and their course begun;*

* The Rascal that cut the Duke of York's Picture.

EPILOGUE.

*And while that prince's figure they deface,
As they before had massacred his name,
Durst their base fears but look him in the face,
They'd use his person as they've us'd his fame.
A face in which such lineaments they read
Of that great martyr's, whose rich blood they shed,
That their rebellious hate they still retain,
And in his son would murder him again.
With indignation then, let each brave heart
Rouse, and unite, to take his injur'd part ;
'Till royal love and goodness call him home,
And songs of triumph meet him as he come ;
'Till heav'n his honour, and our peace restore ;
And villains never wrong his virtue more.*

T H E E N D.



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